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# PLUCK AND LUCK

TOM AND THE TIGER,  
OR, THE BOY WITH THE IRON EYE.

By BERTON BERTREW.



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# PLUCK AND LUCK

## Stories of Adventure.

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# TOM AND THE TIGER

OR,

## THE BOY WITH THE IRON EYES

By BERTON BERTREW

### CHAPTER I.

#### THE TIGER AND TOM.

There are some boys who seem able to accomplish anything they seriously undertake to do.

It makes no difference how difficult it is or how unusual; so long as they put their mind to it they can do it.

Tom Terry was such a boy as this.

Tom was an orphan and lived in New York City. His early history is not worth mentioning, because it is just like the early history of ten thousand other New York boys; but when Tom was in his nineteenth year he forced himself to the front in a way which was altogether peculiar.

This brings us to our story, and the reader may rest assured that it is no fiction, but based upon incidents which actually occurred.

It began three days after Tom Terry lost his job in the Wall Street broker's office, where he had been for a year.

Previous to that the boy had waited on table in a downtown restaurant, being large for his age and looking older than he really was.

When the broker broke and disappeared between two days, Tom's hopes of becoming a Wall Street millionaire vanished, and he made up his mind to take the first thing that offered—always the most sensible way.

The first day was spent among the brokers, going from office to office, but nobody wanted a boy.

The second day was put in among the small restaurants downtown, but none of them wanted a waiter. Some employed only colored help, others preferred Frenchmen or Italians—nobody wanted Tom.

The third day Tom made up his mind to "get a job or bust," as he himself expressed it.

Somebody had suggested to him that it would be a good scheme to apply on board one of the English tramp steamers

for the position of steward's boy, and Tom liked the idea, because he felt that he should like to go to sea.

So he went over across the big bridge to Brooklyn on that beautiful June morning, and proceeding to the water front, made his first application on board a Mediterranean fruiter, lying at Martins' Stores.

The captain proved to be absent, and Tom saw the mate, a civil man, who told him that their steward had no need of an assistant.

"If you will go on board the Bauff Castle which lies over there at the next pier, I wouldn't wonder if you might do something," he said. "They are just in from Bombay, and I happen to know that the steward wants a helper, for he's a cousin of mine and I saw him last night."

Here was something definite. Tom's rule was to follow up every clue for all it was worth.

He hurried over to the next pier and boarded the Bauff Castle.

"Who do you want? The steward?" demanded the second mate, who happened to be in charge of the deck. "He's below overhauling the ship's stores, I believe. Go down through that hatchway. Mind how you step or you may break your neck. Ah, Miss Meldrum! Good morning! Beautiful morning, is it not? Want to see the tiger? We are going to put him ashore now in a few minutes—step right this way!"

It was a young lady whom the mate thus addressed. She was escorted by a stylishly dressed gentleman, and they had come up the gang plank just behind Tom, who thought as he looked at her, that he had never seen such a pretty girl in all his life.

But Tom was not the one to stare and gape against the rules of politeness. With one hasty glance at the girl he made his way to the lower deck where he was told, much to his disgust, that the steward had gone ashore and would not be back until afternoon.

This was disappointing, and Tom would have hurried away

if his attention had not been suddenly attracted by a strange cry which just then resounded through the confined space.

It was not exactly a roar, being more of a cat-like snarl. Tom might not have thought of a tiger if he had not remembered what the mate had said to Miss Meldrum on the deck; as it was he looked around, and seeing several sailors standing together near the place from which the sound had proceeded, he hurried forward and found that they were looking at a huge Bengal tiger confined in a strong cage built upon the deck.

It was a magnificent specimen, the largest tiger Tom had ever seen, and beautifully striped.

Tom's interest was aroused at once, for he was passionately fond of animals; from his earliest boyhood he had always been able to exercise great power over them. Horses loved him, fierce dogs grew as gentle as kittens when Tom touched them. Many had noticed this and talked to the boy about it, but to Tom it all came natural, and he had never given it any special thought.

It was just like him to forget everything else but the tiger.

There was a portable cage with big iron bars near the other, and by the side of this cage stood the most curious-looking boy Tom had ever laid eyes on.

He was of medium height and very slim, his color was that of a dark mulatto where the skin could be seen; his dress was just a shirt and a pair of tattered trousers. He was bare-headed and bare-footed, but the most peculiar feature was his face.

It looked almost like the tiger's face; the eyes were bright and glittering, the nose rounded and hairy; the hair on his head, which was intensely black and hung down over his shoulders, extended also over his face, covering the greater part of the forehead and cheeks; on the nose it was short and downy, but from the cheeks it hung down in long silky locks, while the chin, strange to say, was bare.

Tom thought of the "hairy boy" he had once seen exhibited as a freak in a Bowery museum, and he asked a sailor who stood near who the strange being was.

"He's a Toda boy from the hills of India," replied the sailor. "He comes with the tiger and is half a tiger himself. You ought to see him go in the cage."

"Is he going in now?" asked Tom.

"Can't say. We are waiting for the owner of the tiger, a Lascar fellow named Ram Jemborree; we've got to land the brute and we don't dare to move him till he comes."

While the sailor was talking, the mate came bursting down upon the deck.

"Come, come! We must get the beast into the other cage," he said. "Tiger will have to do it. I've just had a dispatch from Mr. Meldrum. Ram Jemborree has been arrested. It seems he stole the tiger. The beast has got to go to the public stores."

There was more talk. Tom did not understand it all. Suddenly the mate went up to the Toda boy and said:

"Tiger, your boss can't come. You've got to put your brother in the cage. He goes ashore now, and you go with him. Understand?"

"Yes, sahib," replied the Toda boy, putting his hands together before his face and making a profound salaam.

"You'll do it," continued the mate, adding in an undertone: "By gracious, you'll have to, for we'll never get the tiger off the ship in any other way."

"Yes, sahib. Me do him. Boss say me do him he no come back. Rajah, he obey Tiger. Have no fear."

"Is the boy's name Tiger?" whispered Tom, to the friendly sailor.

"That's what it is," replied the man, "or at least that's

what we call him, and the tiger's name is Rajah. Watch, now, and you'll have a free show."

The Toda boy went up to the tiger's cage and proceeded to unfasten the heavily barred door.

The mate and all hands fell back as far as possible. Still they seemed to have confidence in the boy, and not to be very much afraid.

Of course, Tom fell back with the rest, and he stood there near the iron stairway, watching the Toda's proceedings with intense interest.

The boy walked deliberately into the cage, his glittering eyes fixed upon the huge beast.

Instead of springing upon him as any one might have expected, the tiger began to purr and lick his outstretched hand.

Previously to this the other cage had been made ready. The door stood open, and there was a big iron ring on top with a block and fall attached by which to hoist it on deck.

Now, the Toda boy began talking to the tiger in a strange language; his tone was low and melodious; as he spoke he backed out of one cage and into the other, the tiger following him without hesitation.

Still keeping his eyes fixed on the beast the boy turned and backed out again, fastening the door of the portable cage by putting an iron pin through two staples. Tom thought at the time that it was very insecure.

"Hooray! Bravo, Tiger!" cried the sailors.

The Toda boy looked at them with a puzzled expression. He did not seem to think he had done anything remarkable.

"I'll bet anything I could do that," thought Tom. "I've done it with dogs, and I'd like to try it on a tiger."

Just then he caught the Toda's eye. The boy looked at him intently, a smile overspreading his face.

"Get on deck, all hands!" roared the mate. "Tiger, get ready to go with Rajah. Look alive there! Look alive!"

Tom hurried up on deck with the rest.

The Toda boy came up last. Tom saw him standing in front of the knot of sailors who crowded around the hatchway to see the cage come up.

Beyond the hatch stood Miss Minnie Meldrum, the pretty girl who had attracted Tom's attention, and who, by the way, was the daughter of the consignee of the Bauff Castle; at her side was the gentleman who had escorted her on board the steamer.

"Get back out of the way there!" roared the mate. "Get back, everybody. Hoist away!"

Space was cleared, the donkey engine began to clatter, ropes creaked and the big cage came swinging up through the hatch.

Suddenly there was a snap and the hoisting rope parted. Down dropped the cage, striking on its side, having been tilted by the parting of the rope.

The iron pin slipped from the staples and the door flew open and then to the horror of everybody the tiger with a ferocious snarl rushed out upon the deck.

It was a terrible moment.

Never was there such a scattering.

The mate was wild with rage and did a very foolish and cruel thing.

"It's your fault!" he roared, seizing the Toda boy and flinging him violently upon the deck where the poor fellow lay half stunned.

The tiger leaped across the hatch and crouched for a spring, lashing the deck with its tail.

Directly in front of him stood Miss Minnie Meldrum, paralyzed with fear and deserted by her cowardly escort, who had run forward as fast as his legs could carry him at the first alarm.

"Save the girl!"

"Shoot the tiger!"

"Where's the boy?"

"Great heavens! Can nothing be done?"

Everybody was shouting out something different, but nobody made a move but Tom Terry, who sprang to the girl's side and faced the huge beast.

He fixed his eyes upon the tiger, bending his whole mind to the desperate work which he was about to do.

In an instant the tiger began to purr like a great cat, and putting its head down upon its paws, dragged itself nearer to Tom's feet.

## CHAPTER II.

### TOM STRIKES A STREAK OF LUCK.

There was profound silence on the deck as Tom held the tiger transfixed by the mysterious power of his eye.

Everyone knows that certain persons possess this power. The effect of the human eye upon animals, when backed by a strong will is always remarkable, but the power which Tom Terry now displayed is a gift of which but few can boast.

"Get the cage ready, I'll take him in," breathed Tom.

Then without moving his eye for one instant from the tiger, he added:

"Step back out of the way, miss, you are perfectly safe now."

He did not see the girl when she moved back along the deck, for he realized fully that to remove his eyes from the tiger meant death.

Meanwhile, two of the sailors, more venturesome than the rest, righted the cage, and set the door open.

All held their breath, as Tom, moving in a semi-circle around the hatch, backed into the cage.

The tiger rose heavily to its feet and followed him, still purring loudly.

Still keeping his eyes fixed upon the beast, Tom managed to turn himself and back out again.

He closed the door, dropped the pin into place, and fell back among the sailors, all in a tremble, the cold perspiration standing out all over him.

A wild cheer went up; it was hard to say who started it, but it seemed to spread itself all over the deck of the Bauff Castle, and the little knot of men who had gathered on the pier to see the tiger come ashore, also took it up.

"Say, young feller, you lick the Toda all hollow at tiger taming," said the friendly sailor, who was the first to speak to Tom. "By Jove, you did a big thing that time, and old man Meldrum ought to know it. You're a boy with an iron eye."

It was the first time Tom ever heard this expression applied to himself, but he was destined to hear it many times before he saw the last of the tiger, now safely in the cage.

"Where's that boy?" he demanded, turning away from the sailor without even stopping to answer. "It was a shame for the mate to use him so."

Evidently the mate thought otherwise, for Tom saw him spring upon the poor wretch who was certainly not responsible for the accident.

The Toda boy had regained his feet; the blood was trickling down his long black hair from a serious scalp wound in the back of the head.

"Don't kill me? Don't kill me, boss!" he cried, making his pitiful little salaam to the angry man, who seized him by the hair and slung him around, storming and raving about the tiger all the while.

"Let that boy alone, you big brute!" cried Tom, rushing up.

"Mind your own business!" roared the mate.

He said more which we don't care to repeat, but his remarks

were cut short by the discovery that the boy with the iron eye also had an iron arm.

Tom hauled off and took him under the chin.

The mate fell sprawling on the deck. Tom flung his arm about poor "Tiger."

"Lay a hand on him again if you dare!" he shouted. "It was your fault, if it was anybody's, that the cage fell!"

The sailors would have cheered if they had dared, but the crowd on the pier did it for them.

"That's right! Hit him again if he comes at you!" they roared. "Lay the brute out! Don't let him hurt the freak!"—and so on.

The mate was on his feet by this time, and was rushing at Tom full of bluster, when Miss Minnie Meldrum suddenly came between them.

"For shame, Mr. Banta!" she cried. "Do you forget that this young man saved my life? Attend to your business, sir, and get the tiger ashore. My father shall be informed of this."

The mate slunk away, and Minnie Meldrum turned to Tom who was just then in rather an awkward situation, for "Tiger" had fallen at his feet, and was kissing his shoes after the fashion of his people—a fashion, by the way, which was not at all agreeable to Tom.

"There, there, don't do that!" he said, pulling away, and raising his hat to the girl, who could not help smiling at the ridiculous position in which he was placed.

"I want to thank you for what you did for me," she said. "You certainly saved my life and I shall never forget it. I wish you would call on my father and let him thank you, too."

"There's nothing to thank me for, miss," replied Tom, blushing. "It was all very easy; there was really no danger from the tiger as long as I could hold his eye."

"It's very modest in you to say so," said Minnie. "but I don't believe there's another boy in New York who would have dared to try it. You will call on father, won't you? I can't thank you half enough."

"Oh, aw! Say, yes! Let me thank you, too!" cried a stylish young gentleman, who just then came bustling up. "Really, I—I ought to thank you! I ran for help as soon as I saw the cage fall, Miss Meldrum. I declare I never thought of doing what this boy did, or I'd have tried it myself."

It was Minnie Meldrum's cowardly escort, and if he was at all sensitive he ought to have felt very small, the way the girl looked at him then.

"The least you say the better, Ralph Pomeroy," she replied, coldly, and then turned her head away.

The young man began a voluble explanation.

Tom thought that there was going to be a lover's quarrel, and inwardly voted that he as "not in it."

So again raising his hat politely, he hurried down the gang plank and off the pier, followed by the cheers of the crowd.

He would have liked to remain to see the tiger's cage safely on the big truck which was waiting to receive it, but he felt somewhat overwhelmed by all that had occurred, and was anxious to get away.

"By gracious, I did do it," he muttered, when he found himself safe on Furman Street. "I can do it with tigers just as I can with dogs. Wonder why I wouldn't make a good animal tamer? Wish to gracious I owned that tiger; he's just a grand beast, and I could make a pot of money exhibiting him with the Toda boy."

It was a strange notion for a boy like Tom Terry to entertain, but somehow it stuck to him. He could not get it out of his head all that day nor the next.

And they were dreary days for Tom.

Jobs were scarce in the localities where he applied.

A week passed. Tom's room rent was due, and to make matters worse, his chum, Charlie, Johnson, a district messenger

boy, was sent off to the Boston office by his employers. The landlady, knowing that Tom was out of a job, notified him that he must pay up or leave the house.

Tom went out early next morning and bought a paper to study the want "ads." feeling discouraged enough. While he was looking it over his eyes fell on the following:

"IMPORTANT TO SHOWMEN!—To be sold at public auction by Goodheart & Bennis, 30 Hanover Square, this day at twelve, noon, per order of Meldrum & Co., one living Royal Bengal tiger, just imported from Bombay. The beast is in perfect condition and a splendid specimen. Circus and menagerie managers are invited to call for permit to inspect upon Meldrum & Co., 100 South William Street, or the auctioneers. Sale absolute; conditions, cash down and the immediate removal of the tiger."

"By gracious, that's my tiger," thought Tom, and again that same strange desire to own the brute popped into his head.

Another thought came to him later, after he had started out on his dreary search for work.

"I'll go to Meldrum & Co. and ask for a permit to see the tiger," flashed across his mind. "I'd just like to have one more look at him before he's sold."

So he bent his steps toward South William Street, and entered the office of the rich East India merchant, never dreaming of the strange reception which awaited him there.

It began when he timidly asked for the permit at the office window.

"What do you want to see the tiger for?" demanded the spruce young clerk, looking at him through the peephole; "who are you from?"

"I ain't from anybody. I saw the 'ad' and just thought——"

"The tiger ain't on exhibition," snapped the clerk.

At the same instant the ground glass door opened and an elderly gentleman stepped out.

As soon as he saw Tom he threw up his hands and exclaimed:

"Well, well! Here's the boy at last!"

Tom drew back, hardly knowing what to make of it.

"What's your name?" demanded the old gentleman, abruptly.

"Tom Terry, sir."

"Tom Terry, eh? Well, mine ain't Meldrum, as you may think. I'm Mr. Meldrum's partner. He's out of town. Of course you may have a permit to see the tiger, but before you take it, tell me if you know anything about this?"

Then the old gentleman thrust his hand into his pocket and drew out a photograph, handing it over to Tom.

To his utter amazement, it was a picture of himself standing beside the Toda boy on the deck of the Bauff Castle, with his arm about the strange creature's neck.

"Surprise you, eh?" the old man rattled on. "Taken by one of our young men who happened to carry a breast camera and was there at the time. That's you, ain't it? You're the boy who saved Miss Meldrum from the tiger? Are you or ain't you? Why don't you speak up?"

"It's certainly my picture, sir," stammered Tom, "and I was there when the tiger got loose."

"You're the boy who controlled him by your will power, or your eye, or whatever you've a mind to call it. Are you or ain't you? Out with it. I'm in a hurry. Can't stand here talking all day."

"I'm the boy, sir," replied Tom, very much confused.

"I thought so! I recognized you at once. Lucky thing for you that our young man happened to snap you as he did, for we didn't know your name or address. Now, look here, boy, Mr. Meldrum's out and he'll never be in—to you."

"I don't want to see him!" flashed Tom. "I didn't come here for that."

"Hold your horses, now! Hold your horses, and don't you fly off the hooks. Because you did this thing, Meldrum ain't going to take you into the firm nor marry you to his daughter, nor no such romantic rubbish. My name is Dusenbury, I'm Meldrum's partner. 'How much is it worth?' he says to me when we talked it over. 'I'd like to reward the boy and be done with him once and for all.' 'Five hundred ought to cover it,' says I to him, so he drew a check for five hundred and here it is. I'll fill your name in."

Tom was overwhelmed, as well he might be, but he was modest withal.

"I don't want Mr. Meldrum's money," he stammered.

"Yes, you do," snapped Mr. Dusenbury. "Of course you do. You'd be a fool if you didn't. Tom Terry is it? Yes, well, here you are."

He seized a pen which lay on the little desk under the peephole in the office partition and hastily wrote Tom's name on the check.

Thrusting it upon the astonished boy he hurried out, saying with a chuckle:

"Now, go buy that tiger and make a fortune exhibiting him. You can do it. Ha! ha! ha!"

It was strange advice to give a boy of eighteen. Having given it Mr. Dusenbury left the office and slammed the door behind him, leaving Tom staring at the check.

### CHAPTER III.

#### THE MAN WITH THE LONG KNIFE.

"Buy the tiger! That's just what I will do—if I can!"

Tom Terry spoke these words and he meant them.

Probably Mr. Dusenbury meant it all for a joke. He little dreamed what was passing in the boy's mind.

Tom got out of the office in time to see Mr. Dusenbury's coat tails vanishing around the corner of Broad Street.

He did not ask again for the permit. He did not stop for anything. He could only think of the check.

"Five hundred dollars! Why, it's a fortune! It will set me up in business—it will do a thousand things."

This was his second thought as he walked rapidly down the street, walked on through many streets, hardly knowing in which direction he went, and not caring at all.

"Shall I buy the tiger or shall I not?"

To be or not to be was the question.

Tom thought of a hundred things that he might do with the five hundred dollars, but he could not get the tiger out of his head.

The whole thing had come about so strangely that it seemed unreal, and yet there was the check. Again and again Tom took it out and looked at it.

At last his mind was made up.

"I'll take old man Dusenbury's advice and buy the tiger, if I can get it," he resolved. "I believe he's right. I could make a fortune exhibiting him, especially if I could get that Toda boy to go along."

It was a bold resolve, but Tom was a boy who never turned back once his mind was made up.

He had no more idea what the latest market quotation on tigers was than the man in the moon, but he had a very lively fear that his five hundred dollars might not take the tiger at all, when at a little before noon he presented himself at the store of Goodheart & Bennis on Hanover Square.

There was quite a crowd in the store. It was very evident

from the goods piled around that other things beside the tiger were to be sold.

"Where's the tiger?" asked Tom, of a man who seemed to belong to the place.

"Oh, he's not here, he's over at the stores," replied the man.

"What do you think he'll go for?"

"A thousand dollars would be a low price. Who are you from?"

"That don't matter," replied Tom, quietly.

The man laughed and walked away.

In a few moments the auction began.

First it was a cargo of damaged fruit that was put up; then it was a lot of moldy cheese, and one thing after another followed, until at last the auctioneer began to rattle off a lot of words about the tiger.

Tom listened attentively, gathering from it all that the tiger had been stolen by the Lascar, who brought the beast from Bombay, and that Meldrum & Co. had received a cablegram ordering the man's arrest and the sale of the tiger, on account of the rightful owners.

"And now, then, gentlemen, what am I offered for the beast?" cried the auctioneer. "Without exception he is the finest specimen of a Bengal tiger ever imported into the United States; pure breed, pure blood; everything about him A No. 1; has to be seen to be appreciated. Those here who have seen him know what he is, and those who haven't will have to take it on my say so. Come, gentlemen, speak up! Give me a bid! Conditions cash down, and the tiger to be removed from the merchants' stores by twelve noon to-morrow. What! No bid! No bid for this royal brute! I am surprised!"

Strange as it may seem it was a fact—there was no bid. The sale had been hastily advertised and it was the season of the year when showmen were out of town.

It fell to Tom Terry to start the bid on the tiger and when he called out a hundred dollars everybody laughed but the auctioneer, who knew that Meldrum & Co. were determined to sell the tiger and that the bid would stand.

"Nonsense!" he cried. "No such bid can be accepted, but it will do for a starter."

Somebody plucked up courage to raise it fifty dollars—and Tom went to two hundred.

Another stepped in and raised it twenty-five and Tom made it fifty; his opponent tried twenty-five again and Tom struck three hundred.

There was a long wait. A great deal of talk on the part of the auctioneer who then cried: "Gone! What name?"

"Thomas Terry!" answered Tom, all in a tremble at the boldness of what he had done.

A little delay about the check, a telephone talk with Meldrum & Co., and then Tom walked out of the auction room the owner of the tiger, with the papers in his pocket which secured him in the possession of the beast.

"Have I got a white elephant on my hands?" he asked himself. "What in the world shall I do with him? Where am I going to take him?"

These and a hundred similar questions he asked himself while on the way to Red Hook Point, Brooklyn, where he had been told he would find the merchants' stores.

A thunderstorm came up while Tom was on his way down Van Brunt Street on the little horse car, the last of its kind in Brooklyn, since the reign of the trolleys set in.

He had cooled down by the time he presented himself at the office of the big warehouse.

He still had two hundred dollars left, and he determined to try to persuade the warehouse people to hold the beast a few days longer, until he could have time to turn himself and decide what to do.

"We don't want him," said the man in the office, after Tom

had succeeded in establishing himself as the purchaser of the tiger. "He's a big nuisance, and then there's that hairy freak to feed besides."

"What! Is the Toda boy here, too?" demanded Tom.

"I don't know what you call him," replied the clerk, "but we've had enough of it. We'll give you one day more and that's the most. Want to see the beast?"

Tom did and he said so. The rain was coming down in torrents when they crossed the paved yard to the low warehouse, which is built directly on the bulkhead overlooking the bay.

It was as black as night, and a fearful clap of thunder burst upon them as the clerk threw open the iron door.

"Away over there at the other end of the store," he said, "where you see the light. I've got to go back and close some of the windows in the next building. We'll have a lot of spoiled cotton on our hands if I don't."

Tom groped his way over the shaky floor of the big warehouse.

It was so dark that he could hardly see an inch ahead, and he had almost a mind to turn back and ask for a lantern to guide him.

Suddenly he heard heavy footfalls pacing up and down in the darkness.

"Rajah! Rajah! Good Rajah! Lie down, Rajah! Thunder no hurt you, Rajah!" a voice called out.

"That's the Toda boy," thought Tom, and in a minute he came under a skylight and was able to make out the tiger's cage.

The hairy boy stood before it. As he caught sight of Tom he gave a joyful cry and flinging himself down before him began to kiss his feet again.

"Oh, sahib! Buy Rajah! Him good tiger! Buy him! Buy me!" he cried. "Me be good slave! Buy Tiger! Him serve you well!"

"Get up," said Tom; "don't do that. I don't like it. I have bought the tiger. He is mine."

"Take me, too, boss! Buy me, too," cried the boy. "Oh, don't let them take Rajah away from me! Den me die!"

Tom stooped down and taking the boy's hand, lifted him to his feet.

He was too deeply interested to hear the stealthy footstep which came creeping toward him through the darkness.

The dark, treacherous face of the man who silently stole toward him, he could not have seen then if he had looked.

"You shall go with me, Tiger," said Tom. "I won't desert you; in fact, I need you. Rajah is mine, and——"

"Not so! The tiger is mine!" hissed a voice and all in an instant a man with a face as black as a negro and long glossy hair hanging down over his shoulders, sprang out of the darkness.

Rajah gave a fierce snarl and "Tiger" a wild cry of terror as the Lascar, for such he was, whipped out a long, glittering knife and made a rush at Tom.

At the same instant came a fearful clap of thunder which seemed to shake the warehouse to its foundation stones.

## CHAPTER IV.

### TOM BEGINS BUSINESS.

A terrific clap of thunder broke over the roof of the merchants' stores as the man with the knife sprang upon Tom Terry.

It would have been all up with Rajah's new owner in an instant but for "Tiger," the little hairy-faced Toda boy.

Quick as thought he leaped upon the Lascar, for Tiger instantly recognized his old master, Ram Jemborree, and no one knew better than the Toda what a desperate character he was.

Screaming out something in his native language which Tom could not understand, he caught the descending knife and wrenching it out of the Lascar's hand, flung it away into the darkness.

This was the last Tom knew for the moment.

The fearful grip of the Lascar about his throat had done its work—he sank down unconscious.

"You next, you young monkey!" hissed the Lascar, aiming a blow at Tiger, who dodged it and vanished in the darkness.

Rajah rose on his hind legs and beat against the bars of his cage, awaking the echoes of the old warehouse with his snarling cries.

"I settle him now!" hissed the Lascar, picking up Tom as though he had been a baby and running toward the door which opened on the bulkhead. "They take Rajah from me! No! No! No! I kill one—I kill all! See!"

Probably this remark was for the benefit of the clerk of the warehousing company and two stout laborers, who, attracted by the tiger's cries, were running toward the cage.

"Help! Keel him! Keel him! He keel de sahib!" screamed the Toda out of the darkness, and then the thunder crashed again, a deafening peal.

It was an exciting moment.

Tom Terry never forgot it.

Consciousness returned to the boy while he was still in the grip of the Lascar.

He struggled and kicked, but it was no use.

Through the open door the Hindoo hurried, and raising Tom, threw him over the bulkhead into the East River, a flash of lightning illuminating the western sky as the boy went down beneath the waves.

Poor Tom!

It looked just then as if the purchase of the tiger had been a bad investment, for like many other city boys Tom Terry could not swim a stroke, and the ebb tide runs strong around Red Hook Point.

Here was another moment never to be forgotten—the most awful moment of the boy's life!

"Great Heavens! This is murder!" cried the clerk. "Catch that man!"

Then the clerk and the two laborers started to chase the Lascar along the bulkhead, for the fellow was running for all he was worth.

Strange they never thought of the drowning boy calling for help from the dark waters which swept past the bulkhead.

But there was one who did.

Tiger!

He shot through the door like a streak, and flinging his arms above his head, dove into the river.

"Help! Help! Sabe him! Sabe de sahib!" he screamed. "Trow a line! Tiger hold him! Oh, be quick!"

All this roused the men to action.

The next flash showed them Tom and Tiger in the water.

The Toda boy was behind Tom, holding him up.

There was a rush and scramble to save life then, and the Lascar was forgotten.

Fortunately there was an old hawser in the warehouse near the door, and Tom Terry was pulled out of the river at the end of it.

Tiger, seeing him safe, scrambled up the bulkhead—no line was needed for him.

It was the closest call Tom had ever had, and naturally it took him some moments to recover from the shock.

The clerk was kind and took him into the office, and gave

him a dry suit of clothes to put on. He hurried him away so quick that Tom had no time to speak a word to Tiger.

The poor little freak did not seem to mind, but just took up his place by Rajah's cage and never spoke after he saw that Tom was safe.

"You must get that beast out of here first thing to-morrow," said the clerk. "You see what a nuisance he is. Who was that nigger? Do you know?"

Tom told what he knew, which, of course, was but little.

"Give me till to-morrow," he said. "I'll do my best to hurry; how much do you want to put a special guard on the tiger to-night?"

At first the clerk thought it could not be done, but Tom tried a ten-dollar bill with a promise of another one for the guard, which caused the clerk to change his mind.

"You'd better report this to the police," he said; "that fellow will lay for you sure."

But Tom had been thinking. To attempt to deal with the police would only delay matters.

"I've got to find a place for the tiger right away," he determined; "that's my first move."

Then he went back to the warehouse where Tiger still remained.

The boy's eyes lit up when he saw Tom.

"Buy me, sahib! Buy me!" he cried, as Tom and the clerk drew near the cage.

"You've got your hands full, young fellow," laughed the clerk, "but don't you go without settling it—don't you leave that freak on our hands."

Without paying any attention to this remark, Tom put his hand on Tiger's shoulder and looked him full in the eyes.

"Buy you," he said, quietly. "Look here, Tiger, you saved my life—you are my friend forever. Don't you be afraid. I shan't go back on you."

Tiger's little beady eyes glistened.

"Dat be good, sahib," he replied. "Dat be good. Tiger be good boy."

"Come with me," said Tom. "I'm going, now."

"Tiger no lebe Rajah."

"Oh, but you must. Rajah is mine—so are you. These men will take care of him."

"No, no! Me stay. Ram Jemborree, he come back—he kill Rajah mebbe. Me stay."

Tom fixed his eyes upon the boy.

"Perhaps if I put my whole mind to it I can make him obey me as easily as I did the tiger," he thought.

Possibly it was that, or perhaps the Toda had already made up his mind to yield. At all events he followed Tom out of the warehouse willingly enough, trotting by his side like a big dog.

"I'll see you in the morning," said Tom, to the clerk, when he parted with him at the yard gate. "Don't you worry; the tiger shall be taken away."

"I hope to goodness you'll be as good as your word," replied the clerk. "We've had enough of the brute down here, and don't you make any mistake."

Tom steered for Van Brunt Street and his first move was to take Tiger into a small clothing store where the Toda boy was rigged out with new clothes from head to foot, something which was entirely necessary, for the poor fellow was almost in rags.

But it was quite an ordeal for Tom.

The moment they struck Van Brunt Street the boys began to crowd about them.

"Oh, look at de hairy boy!" they cried. "Look at de monkey dressed up! Look at de orang-outang!"

They crowded around the store and waited for them to come out, greeting them with wild shouts when they appeared.

Poor Toda clung to Tom, frightened out of his wits. It was a great relief when the car came and they were able to force their way through the crowd and get aboard.

"I've got myself into business, that's certain," thought Tom. "But by gracious, there's money in all this if I can only stick it out."

On his way down to the Hamilton Ferry, Tom did a deal of thinking. Tiger proved no interruption to his thoughts, for he never said a word.

Before they reached the ferry he had fully determined upon his course.

The storm had now cleared away, and as it promised to be a fine evening, Tom saw no reason for delay in putting his plan into execution.

Instead of crossing to New York, he changed cars and went straight to Coney Island.

During the long ride he tried his best to draw out his strange companion and learn something of his history.

It was not much use.

All he learned was that Tiger had been with the Lascar since his earliest recollection, and had been terribly ill-treated by the man.

He seemed to stand in awful fear of him.

"He kill me if he catchee me, sahib," he kept saying. "He kill Rajah, too. Look out! But me neber lebe you. You boss, now. Tiger work! Tiger make Rajah jump, make him do tricks—heap tricks! Oh, yes! sahib make mooch money. Tiger help! Tiger be good boy, you see."

"And you shall have your share," said Tom. "Tiger, we are partners in this deal."

Tiger grinned, but Tom saw that he did not understand, for he immediately replied:

"Oh, yes! Oh, yes! Tiger make Rajah do tricks, sahib. Mooch money. Sahib get rich. Tiger be good slabe all de time."

Then Tom put his arm around the boy's shoulder, saying:

"Don't you say slave again! Tiger, you are my brother now. You are my friend for life."

A strange partnership, surely!

Tom and Tiger!

But Tom was out for business and not sentiment.

Arriving at the island, he set out to put his plan into immediate execution.

The rush season at the seashore was close at hand, and all Tom wanted was a place to put Rajah—after that the money would come.

He and tiger walked the length and breadth of the famous "Bowery," but without seeing a hole or corner to rent, until at last they struck a small building well down at the end of the long board walk, which seemed to be just the thing which Tom had in mind.

It was a one-story shanty, with a big room in the back, and a little one in front.

Tom found the owner in a saloon near by, and introducing himself, inquired the rent.

The man stared at Tiger, as did everyone else in the saloon.

"What do you want to do with the place?" he demanded; "exhibit him?"

Tom explained.

"Two hundred dollars for the season, half in advance," said the landlord, "you to sign a paper to clear me of any risk in case the tiger gets loose."

"That's business," replied Tom promptly. "Draw up your lease and the money is ready."

"Twenty-five dollars down to bind the bargain—I don't know you," said the man.

This seemed reasonable enough.

Tom thought a moment and paid the money over.

It was now a little after seven o'clock.

Tom had been the owner of the tiger a little more than seven hours.

Business had already begun.

## CHAPTER V.

### TOM TRIES HIS IRON EYE ONCE MORE.

That night Tom and Tiger slept on the bare floor of their new show room.

Funds were getting low, and it was necessary to economize, for there were big expenses ahead. Rajah must be brought down to the island, and everything put in shape to begin business before there could be any return.

As soon as it was daylight, Tom was up and doing.

His first move was to buy a pail and mop and two brooms, and then he and Tiger went to work to clean the place, which was in a horrible condition.

Tiger worked with a will, and continually objected to Tom's raising a finger, but, of course, he was not allowed to have his way.

At seven o'clock they ate breakfast—frankfurters and rolls, purchased at a neighboring stand.

The place was now as clean as a whistle, and when at half-past seven the landlord came in he looked somewhat astonished.

"Say, you're a worker," he exclaimed; "but I want to understand this thing fully. Have you really got a live tiger you mean to show here?"

"Do you suppose I'd part with twenty-five dollars if I hadn't?" demanded Tom. "Now, look here, mister, I'm out for business, and you want to help me all you can."

"Well, of course," said the landlord; "but you're only a boy, and——"

"And am ready to do a man's work every time. I'm out for money just the same as you are. Come around here at noon and see the tiger. You never saw his equal in all your life."

It was promising a good deal, but Tom was as good as his word.

At eight o'clock, accompanied by Tiger, Tom went to Brooklyn and hired a covered furniture van.

There was but little trouble getting the cage into the van, for the clerk at the merchants' stores was only too ready to lend every assistance in his power.

Then with Tom on the box, with the driver and Tiger inside the van with Rajah, they drove down to Coney Island, rounding up before the door of Tom's shanty at precisely five minutes to twelve.

Here there was more difficulty than at the warehouse, but the neighbors who came crowding round were all willing to lend a hand, and at last the big cage was safely deposited in the back room, and the van man with his money in his pocket was gone.

By this time there was a big crowd gathered before the door, and everyone wanted to come in and see the tiger free gratis, but Tom would have nothing of the sort.

Planting himself at the door, he shouted:

"Ten cents admission, ladies and gentlemen! I'm here for business, and this is no free show!"

The crowd laughed and some of them began to move away, but more stayed and handed over their dimes.

Tom took in five dollars, which was half the cost of the

van, and Tiger helped matters out by putting Rajah through his tricks, some of which were very comical, for the big beast stood on his hind legs, bowed, shouldered a stick and marched up and down the cage, turned somersaults and did other wonderful things in obedience to the commands of Tiger, given in words of the meaning of which Tom knew as little as the crowd.

The landlord who stood by and watched it all was immensely pleased.

That afternoon Tom signed the lease and paid over his seventy-five dollars.

His money was now reduced to exactly the same sum, and there were lots of things to be done yet before business could be actually begun.

But Tom and Tiger did them all but painting the gayly colored canvas which bore a picture of Rajah and of Tiger, announced the character of the show. This cost them another ten.

Seats were built and a ticket booth made. Tom decorated the walls with Japanese fans, and hung paper lanterns from the ceiling, all of which cost but little and made the place look gay.

It took several days to accomplish this, and meanwhile, they had to eat and Rajah had to be fed; there was a bed to buy and bedding, and a little sleeping room to be fitted up and one small expense after another, which swallowed up the money at a fearful rate.

But by Saturday everything was in shape, and Tom engaged a boy recommended as honest by the landlord to take the cash in the ticket booth, and when the sun went down he lit the flaming naphtha torch in front of his shanty, and throwing open the door started his show.

It was a warm night and every train was bringing its crowd.

Hundreds of people were already promenading up and down the board walk, when Tom began to shout:

"Walk right in, ladies and gentlemen; walk in and see the wonderful trick tiger, Rajah, just imported at an immense expense from Bengal. The most remarkable animal ever exhibited on the island! The largest Royal Bengal tiger in America, and the only one ever known to be tamed. Walk right in, ladies and gentlemen! Walk right in and see the What-is-it! The wonderful hairy boy from the Toda tribes of India. Beats the famous Jo Jo all hollow. Is covered with hair from head to foot like an animal, but yet possesses all the intelligence of a man! All to be seen for the small sum of twenty-five cents!"

And so on; Tom had not studied his part, but just spoke out whatever came into his head.

His handsome face, clear ringing voice, and neat dress, attracted the attention of the crowd at once.

The first to enter were two sporty young fellows—Tom never forgot their faces. They planked down their quarters, and Arthur Potts in the box office—it was a box office for a fact—handed them out their tickets, and they passed in to feast their eyes on Rajah in his cage.

"By Jove, that's a fine tiger, Dick"! Tom heard one say to the other. "It's worth a quarter just to have a look at him. If there ain't nothing else to the show."

But there was to be something else to the show. Tom was only waiting for his crowd.

He got it. Inside of twenty minutes he had fifty people in the exhibition room.

They were crowding around the rope which kept them back from Rajah's cage, having a lot of fun with Tiger, who, dressed in a red coat with brass buttons and yellow breeches with green stockings, presented a most remarkable appearance

as he walked up and down before the cage, keeping pace with Rajah, who was growing very uneasy at the crowd.

Tiger was in his glory. He smiled, showing his glittering white teeth, and paying no attention to the jokes and remarks which were passed upon him.

Alongside the cage Tom had built a little platform upon which he now mounted, and for the first time faced an audience.

How his heart beat! It seemed as if he could not say a word.

But the feeling soon left him and he began with a little speech about Rajah, who every now and then broke in with a savage snarl.

Suddenly he stopped and snapped his fingers.

"Tiger!" he cried. "Up, Tiger!"

Of course the audience expected to see Rajah rise on his hind legs, and were not a little surprised when the Toda boy jumped up upon the little stage.

"Now, ladies and gentlemen, here we have the wonderful hairy boy!" cried Tom. "The last living descendant of the Toda tribes of southern India, captured in his native wilds in the Nelghery Hills. He is covered with hair from head to foot, and has been pronounced by scientists to be the missing link between the human and brute creation. He has the hair of an animal, but the intelligence of a man. His control over the wild beasts of the forests is simply wonderful, and second only to my own."

Here the audience laughed, but Tom looked as grave as a deacon.

"You don't believe me, ladies and gentlemen!" he cried. "Very well, the proof of the pudding is in the eating. Wait and see. Tiger will now favor us with a song."

The least said about Tiger's singing the better, but when he did a native dance from which Tom hoped great things, the audience cheered and encored him again and again.

Next it was Rajah's turn.

Tiger put him through his tricks in great shape, but he did not go into the cage as he was well accustomed to do.

Tom reserved that for himself.

He had tried it three times in private and with perfect success.

Whatever power Tiger possessed over Rajah, Tom, strange as it seemed to himself, certainly possessed the same.

The time had now come for him to show it in public.

Tom retired behind a curtain and in a moment came out attired in fleshings with a spangled breech cloth of black velvet, all of which showed off his symmetrical figure to its fullest advantage.

His face was pale, but determined. To say that he felt no fear would not be the strict truth, but it was overshadowed by the firm determination to succeed.

"Open the cage, Tiger!" he said, playing with the little whip which he carried in his hand.

Tiger called out some unintelligible words, and Rajah retreated to the furthest corner of the cage and crouched down, lashing the floor with his tail.

The time had come!

When Tiger drew back the door, Tom, who had mounted the steps, passed into the cage.

Rajah gave a fierce snarl and sprang forward.

But Tom's iron eye was upon him.

All that was needed was slow music to make it complete, for Rajah dropped to the floor, putting his head on his paws, with his great, green eyes fixed on Tom.

"You see, ladies and gentlemen!" cried the boy, "I made no vain boast. All the beasts of the forests obey me. I am the great Tomaso, the boy with the Iron Eye!"

## CHAPTER VI.

## UNDER THE TIGER'S PAW.

Precisely three hundred people paid Arthur Potts their quarters that Saturday night.

Tom was almost overwhelmed.

Seventy-five dollars had been taken in the first night and the next day was Sunday. Tom confidently figured on at least two hundred, but alas! he only took in ten.

This sudden dropping off of business was easily accounted for and quite characteristic of Coney Island.

All day long it rained in torrents; it was really remarkable that anybody at all came to the little show.

In the early part of the week business was slow but steady.

By Wednesday night Tom had taken one hundred and fifty dollars at the box.

This would enable him to pay Arthur Potts on Saturday and leave a handsome balance for running expenses and something toward the landlord's claim, the remainder of which was due in three weeks. On Thursday the sun came out strong and the thermometer rose to ninety degrees.

By eleven o'clock Tom was "right in it," and by midnight when he closed the doors he had taken one hundred and eighty-two dollars and seventy-five cents.

"Say, this is good business," declared Arthur Potts. "This is immense! It's hard work, too, sitting there in that box all day for six dollars a week, can't you make it eight?"

"Is this a strike?" asked Tom, quietly.

"No, it ain't; it's only a request," laughed Arthur. "I'll stick to my bargain, but——"

"You shall have eight," interrupted Tom. "It's worth it, and if we keep on doing as well as this, maybe I'll make it ten, but if it had been a strike I would have discharged you on the spot."

"Say, you're white, Mr. Terry," replied Arthur. "If you want any favor out of me any time, don't you be afraid to ask."

That night, when Tom and Tiger were about to turn in, Tom handed out a roll of bills.

"I'm going to divide fifty dollars, Tiger," he said. "The rest we must keep for capital. Here's twenty-five for your share."

Tiger's eyes opened wide.

"No, no, no!" he cried. "Me take not'ing. Oh, sahib, Tiger is so happy! Nebber so happy in him life! What me want with money? Me no want not'ing but to stay with sahib and be him slabe."

And the little Toda boy caught Tom's hand and kissed it, the tears running down his hairy cheeks.

"Come! You're a queer card, Tiger," said Tom. "Never mind. I won't bother you any more."

He resolved to deposit the money in the savings bank for the boy at the earliest opportunity. And thus ended Tom's most successful day.

It was an awful night.

A land breeze was blowing, and Coney Island was hotter than even the city itself.

But evidently the public did not think so, for on Friday the conditions were the same, and it was hotter than ever, yet the people flocked down to the island in crowds.

Every train and boat brought its hundreds, and our friends in the shanty worked like beavers all day long.

Tom fairly shouted himself hoarse. He went into the cage once an hour, from ten in the morning until six at night.

In the evening he was so fatigued, that he hired a man to

do the shouting, for it was his intention to enter the cage every half hour until midnight.

It is unnecessary to say that the money was rolling in by the hatful. The tiger show seemed to be all the rage.

At a quarter past seven Tom came back from supper and immediately went on the platform, for the room was packed with people all eager to see the show.

As he began his little speech his eyes wandered over the faces before him, suddenly resting upon one which caused his heart to give a great bound.

"That's the girl!" he thought; "that's surely Miss Minnie Meldrum; by gracious, how pretty she is! Wonder if that old gentleman can be her father?"

It rather rattled him.

He longed to go down among the audience and prove his suspicion, for Tom was not ungrateful. Many times he had thought of writing to Mr. Meldrum to thank him for his kind gift, but somehow he could never get down to it.

Here was a chance to thank him in person, but Tom could not turn his back on his audience then.

If he had been less occupied with these thoughts, he might have noticed a man in the audience with long, straight hair, and very black face.

He did not look like a negro, the hair proved that he was not. He stood quietly near the door, with his eyes fixed on Tom.

The speech was cut short that time, and Tom whispered to Tiger not to respond if encored on his dance.

As soon as the Toda boy finished his work Tom sprang out in his tights, and jumping down behind the rope started to enter the cage.

The girl who had attracted his attention caught the old gentleman's arm.

"Oh, father! Ain't he handsome!" she whispered.

"Well, Minnie," was the reply, "he may be good looking enough, but he might at least have said thank you for the start I have given him. Why, the fellow is making money hand over fist."

By this time Tom was in the Tiger's cage with his iron eye fixed upon the fierce beast.

Every nerve in the boy's body was strung up to the highest tension, for strange to say, Rajah was not acting in the usual way.

Instead of bounding forward to meet his master he remained in the corner, sullenly lashing the floor with his tail.

Tom determined to retreat at once, but before he could do so the black man suddenly called out one unintelligible word.

Instantly Tiger uttered a sharp cry and flung open the door.

But before Tom could move, Rajah gave one quick spring, and striking the boy with his huge paw, felled him to the floor of the cage.

## CHAPTER VII.

## TOM MEETS MINNIE MELDRUM AGAIN.

It would have been all up with poor Tom in an instant but for Tiger.

Once more the quick action of the Toda boy saved our hero's life.

The moment he heard the word spoken by the black man, the Toda knew what was coming; thus when Rajah knocked his master down—although Tom did not know it—Tiger was already in the cage.

A thrill of horror ran through the audience.

Women screamed, and some fainted; men called out "Shoot the tiger!" All was confusion then.

Minnie Meldrum hid her face on her father's shoulder. Everybody thought that the last moment of the brave young showman had come, when all at once Tiger caught Rajah with his eye.

It was wonderful to see it.

The big brute was just in the act of seizing Tom in its jaws, when Tiger, with his eye fixed upon him and his hands upraised, advanced boldly, motioning Rajah away from his prey.

And the beast obeyed him.

With a sulky snarl he removed his huge paw from Tom's shoulder and retreated to the corner of the cage.

How the audience cheered and clapped!

But it was nothing to the applause that came a moment later.

Tom was shrewd enough to take advantage of the situation.

Bounding to his feet he put one arm about the shoulder of the hairy boy and with a flourish of his disengaged hand, bowed profoundly as he drew the Toda out of the cage.

"That is the way we do it, ladies and gentlemen!" he shouted. "To show you that even in his moments of rage we can control the tiger, we have done this little trick. This completes the programme. Pass right out if you please. In half an hour we exhibit again. Those who remain inside are requested to pay the ticket-seller again."

As the audience filed out of Tom's shanty, one and all believed the whole thing was part of the programme.

As for the black man he had vanished the instant Tiger entered the cage.

Tom and Tiger retired behind the curtain, for our young showman was pretty well shaken up.

"What's come over me, Tiger?" gasped Tom, wiping his perspiring brow. "Am I losing my grip? Good heavens, it was awful! I thought I was a goner sure, and I would have been only for you."

"No, no, sahib! You no lose grip. You eye just as good as mine. It was Ram Jemborree. He make tiger act so."

"What!" cried Tom, in amazement.

"Oh, yes! Me see him! He say,"—here Tiger repeated the Hindoo word, which being entirely unpronounceable we cannot give—"dat do de business. Only for dat Rajah behave."

"Do you mean to say that wretched Lascar was here?" asked Tom.

Yes, Tiger did mean to say it, and he was explaining when Arthur Potts came hurriedly in.

"For Heaven's sake, Mr. Terry, don't you do anything like that again! You nearly scared the life out of me!" he exclaimed.

"That's all right," interrupted Tom. "Arthur, if you see the black man who was in here again don't you let him escape us. That was his work."

"You don't mean it?"

"Yes, I do. It's just as I tell you. What became of the fellow?"

"I'm sure I don't know. I didn't notice the man at all."

"Never mind. I don't hold you responsible. He used to own Rajah and is my enemy—that's all."

"I shall be on the lookout sure; but say, Tom, there's a gentleman and lady outside who want to see you. Mighty pretty girl she is, too. They asked for you by your right name."

Tom blushed up to the eyes.

"By gracious, I forgot all about them in my excitement," he said. "The gentleman gave the name of Meldrum, didn't he?"

"Yes; here's his card."

"All right. Anybody else in?"

"A few."

"Give them back their money and tell them the show don't

begin for half an hour, then close the door. I want to see these people alone."

"All right," replied Arthur. "I suppose I shall tell them that you'll be right out."

"In just a minute," said Tom, pulling his trousers on over his tights. "Just as soon as I can straighten up."

When Tom came out from behind the curtain, Mr. Meldrum and Minnie were standing near the tiger's cage alone.

Tom bowed politely.

"Miss Meldrum, I am more than pleased to meet you again," he said, with the air of a prince.

"And you may be sure I am to meet you," replied Minnie, extending her hand. "This is my father, Mr. Terry. We don't forget that you saved my life."

"But I'm afraid you must think that I have forgotten your great kindness to me, sir," said Tom, shaking hands with the merchant. "I really am quite ashamed of myself, but the fact is——"

"You hadn't met me and you didn't like to intrude," broke in Mr. Meldrum. "Is that what you mean to say, my boy?"

"That's just it, sir. I know I ought to have written and thanked you, but——"

"We'll say no more about it. Look here, you seem to be doing a good business. Do you know I admire your pluck and enterprise; but what put it into your head to buy the tiger, eh?"

"Why, your partner, Mr. Dusenbury, is responsible for that, sir," laughed Tom. "I never should have thought of it, if it hadn't been for him."

"That's what he claims, but I hardly believed it. Dusenbury is such a rattle-brained fellow. Well, how does it go, anyhow? Making out pretty well?"

"First rate. Couldn't ask for anything better."

"Glad to hear it. Take my advice and don't do that last trick of yours too often. You nearly frightened Minnie out of her wits, and I saw two women in your audience faint dead away."

Tom was about to explain, but Mr. Meldrum cut him short.

"Young man," he said, "I'd like to see more of you—to know you better and so would Minnie. Is there anything to hinder you from dining with us on the old Iron Pier, say at eight o'clock?"

"Why, my show is on this evening as usual, sir. I don't see how I can very well do that."

"Oh, but you must," said Minnie. "We won't take no for an answer. We won't detain you more than half an hour. You can come right back again and go on with your show. I suppose you have to eat like the rest of us poor mortals, even if you are the 'Great Tomaso, the boy with an iron eye.'"

There was a merry twinkle in her eye which captivated Tom at once.

He accordingly accepted and at the appointed time presented himself at the Iron Pier, where Minnie and her father had everything in readiness for him.

"Look out for that Lascar," was the last thing he said to Arthur Potts when he left the shanty. "Upon no account let him in again."

Arthur promised faithfully and meant to keep his word.

Soon after Tom's departure the showroom began to fill up again. There had been two exhibitions since the accident occurred.

Tiger walked up and down before the cage exhibiting himself with Rajah, trying to keep the audience interested until Tom should return.

But neither he nor Arthur saw the black man who crouched behind the tiger's cage watching and waiting.

For what?

Tom was soon to learn.

## CHAPTER VIII.

## WHAT RAM DID TO RAJAH.

"Tom Terry, I like you, and I don't propose to let our acquaintance end here!"

Such was the remark of Mr. Meldrum, after the dinner on the old Iron Pier had advanced to its third course.

Mr. Meldrum had been watching the boy. He was a shrewd reader of character, and had already sized Tom up as a gentleman as well as a very shrewd young fellow. He meant every word he said.

"I'm sure I hope it may not, sir," replied Tom, blushing; "but you must remember that our stations in life are very different, and——"

"A fig for stations in life! I care nothing for any such nonsense. I want you to come to my house and see me, and so does Minnie. Here is my card. I have a plan to propose."

Tom took the card and glanced at Minnie doubtfully.

"Yes, I do, Mr. Terry," said the girl. "You must come. Father and I have been talking over your affairs. You want to hear what he has to say."

"It's just this, Tom," said Mr. Meldrum, seeing that the boy was somewhat embarrassed, "I have come to the conclusion that there is money in this tiger business, and I'm going to go into it still further if you say the word."

"I don't know that I exactly understand you, sir," replied Tom. "Perhaps if you will explain——"

"Oh, I know what you are thinking of. You want no partner, for you consider that you are doing well enough as it is, and you are quite right. That ain't it. I've got the chance to bring out another tiger, and also an elephant and two leopards, with some other smaller wild beasts. What's the matter with you taking the entire lot off my hands?"

"But what in the world should I do with them?"

"Do with them! Why, handle them as you did the tiger. Start a regular menagerie and go on the road."

"And risk what little I've made. Would that be wise?"

"You won't. A side show on Coney Island is all right, but the season won't last forever. You want to look out for winter business, and your one tiger would hardly do for that."

"I have my plans, sir."

"I dare say you have. Considering the sort of fellow you are, it would be strange if you hadn't, but mine is better. You want to get into the show business on a larger scale."

"But the money? I don't suppose you are giving away elephants and tigers."

"Not by any means; but I am selling them on time and taking the notes of responsible parties in payment. The long and short of it is, Tom—excuse my familiarity—I want to help you on in the world and I am determined to do it. Come and see me and we'll discuss the matter further. Meanwhile, think my proposition over. I won't detain you now, for business is business, and I know you are anxious to get back."

Yes. Tom was anxious to get back—more than anxious. A strange sense of uneasiness was creeping over him; he felt as if something was going to happen, but what it was he could not tell.

As soon as the dinner was over he excused himself, promising to call on Mr. Meldrum at an early date.

"Good-by," said Minnie. "Keep on as you are going, and you will be a second Barnum before you know it. Don't fail to call on us. I shall never forgive you if you do."

Tom renewed his promise, and hurried back to the shanty.

The shouter was calling out the merits of the tiger show, and there were quite a number of people going in.

"It's time I was there," thought Tom. "This social business

is all very well, but it won't do to go into it too often, or—merciful Heavens! what was that?"

Suddenly an awful cry rang out, coming from the direction of the shanty.

Tom knew that it was the tiger.

Had he been in the showroom just then he would have known more, and he might well have been transfixed with horror, as were dozens who saw what occurred.

Yes, it was the tiger!

The room was well filled with people; the Toda boy was doing his best to keep them in good humor, for the hour for the show had passed.

To help matters out, Tiger went on the platform and began to sing his song, holding his audience well enough, for they were in a mood to be pleased.

Matters were going all right, when all at once the audience saw a black man, with long hair hanging down his shoulders, step from behind the cage and undo the door.

Tiger saw him, too, and gave one wild cry, for as the man pulled the big iron pin out of the staples Rajah gave a leap for the door, uttering that fearful scream which had reached Tom's ears outside.

Instantly the door was forced open, and Rajah cleared the cage with one wild bound.

A cry of horror rang out through the room—the people parted right and left, men shouting, women screaming, no one knowing what was coming next, while Tiger sprang from the platform and threw himself upon the Lascar with a wild cry.

Ram Jemborree shook him off as though he had been a fly, and dealing the boy a wicked blow bolted through the open window with one cat-like leap, disappearing like a flash.

And Rajah?

He was gone, too. He made one mad rush through the door, overturning Arthur Potts in his little booth.

To Tom's horror he saw the tiger spring past him and go dashing down the "Bowery," with great bounds.

"Tiger's loose! The Tiger's loose!" the people shouted.

Never was there such a scattering in all the history of Coney Island.

The people ran helter-skelter, dodging into stores and show booths.

Shots were fired and a crowd of more venturesome spirits seemed to gather like magic.

"Shoot him! Kill him! Kill the tiger!" they shouted.

But Rajah, heedless of their cries, bounded on with Tom close at his heels, exposed to the shots of a dozen revolvers as he ran.

## CHAPTER IX.

## TIGER HUNTING ON CONEY ISLAND.

To describe Tom Terry's feelings now is a difficult task.

When he saw the tiger come bounding out of the shanty, Tom put Rajah down in his own mind as being as good as dead.

"Don't shoot him! Don't shoot the poor beast!" he cried, turning back on the crowd. "You'll have me dead in a minute if you keep on firing. Only let me get ahead of him and it will be all right."

The crowd stopped firing then, and it is more than likely that Tom's bold stand was the means of saving his life, for several of the shots had passed perilously near his head.

"He'll have to be killed, boss!" shouted one of the island policemen, hurrying up to Tom. "You can't never hope to get him back into the cage again."

They ran on together, followed closely by the crowd, which

was growing larger every moment; but no more shots were fired. The presence of the policeman protected the boy.

"Don't talk about killing him," protested Tom. "That beast is worth thousands of dollars. It would ruin me to have him shot."

"Do you want him to eat up half the people on the island, then?" retorted the policeman. "Sure, he must be killed. Your own common sense ought to tell you so. I say you can never get him back into the cage."

"I say I can, if I can only get my eye on him. He's more frightened than we are. He's only making for cover. Get me a strong rope and I'll give you ten dollars."

"Well, I'll try, boss; but where'll I find you?"

"Wherever the tiger is. Be as quick as you can, and for Heaven's sake drive that crowd back."

The policeman went for the rope, but the crowd would not go back.

Tom found that his troubles had just begun.

Rajah was thoroughly frightened by the shouts behind him, and his only idea was to reach a place of safety where he could hide.

As for attacking anybody, there was no one to attack, for you may be very sure Rajah had a clean sweep. There was not a man, woman or child on the island who would have dared to put themselves in his way.

So he ran on until he had passed the elephant, passed the last house on the Bowery, passed the straggling buildings which lay beyond.

Here he turned north and made for the Sand Hills.

With great bounds he flung himself forward until at last even Tom ceased to see him.

Here it was all salt marsh and sand hills and bayberry bushes.

The crowd had neared the shores of Gravesend Bay; there was plenty of chance for the tiger to hide, and every opportunity for him to spring out suddenly upon his pursuers if they were bold enough to advance.

Tom realized that there was going to be trouble if the chase was kept up, and he stopped and began to talk to the crowd.

"You'd better go back and leave this to me," he said. "If you don't, some of you are going to get hurt. The tiger may be behind any one of these hills. He'll make short work of the fellow who happens to get within reach of his paws."

This kind of talk dampened the ardor of the tiger hunters. Many of them now fell back, and after a little the crowd as reduced to half a dozen or so.

Meanwhile, the policeman had not come up, and the few who remained were giving Tom all sorts of advice.

Each one had his own scheme for capturing the tiger, and all Tom had to do—to hear these wiseacres tell it—was to pay over a hundred dollars or so to have Rajah put right back in his cage. But Tom took it coolly and turned them all off.

"Leave me alone," he said. "I'll attend to my own business. I don't want any one's advice."

At last they left him, for it was getting late, and moreover, a thunderstorm was approaching—already it had begun to rain and the lightning played over the Staten Island hills.

"Thank Heaven they have gone," thought Tom, as he stood there in the drenching rain after the last one had departed. "What am I to do? Oh, if I only had Tiger here! Poor wretch! Something must have happened to him, or he would have come before this; but there's no use talking. I can't stand idly here. I must work to save the tiger even if it costs me my life."

By this time he had about given up all hope of seeing the policeman return with the rope, and, as very often happens in such cases, that was the very time the man took for turning up.

Tom was just turning in among the sand hills when he heard some one shouting to him, and there was the policeman hurrying through the rain.

"Sure an' I had the divil's own time to find a rope that would hold," he said, "but I got it at last and here it is so. Now, then, where's the baste?"

"He's in among the sand hills somewhere," replied Tom. "Were you up at my place?"

"Sure and I was. I seen Mr. Potts; he's terribly excited. I told him he'd better stay and mind the shop, and leave you and me to look after the tiger."

"You were right. Here's a ten for your trouble, and there'll be a twenty on top of it if we get the tiger all right. Did you see anything of my Toda?"

"Your toad? What the deuce do you mean?"

"The hairy boy."

"Oh, aye! No; he's run away. Mr. Potts knows nothing about him."

"How did the tiger get free?"

"Sure a nagur opened the cage and let him out. I wish I had the black divil under my fist right now."

"I thought as much," said Tom, "but come on, officer, we'd better be moving."

"An' it's not meself that cares to go, but for you I'll do it," replied the officer; "as sure as me name is McSweeny. I'm mortal afeard of that baste."

So was Tom, but that did not deter him.

At any cost the tiger must be recovered, so he walked boldly in among the sand hills, ready to see the tiger spring out at them any instant, twisting the end of the rope into a slip noose as they moved along.

Thus they proceeded for about a quarter of a mile without adventure, coming at last upon an old shed built back from the tracks of the railroad which runs to Norton's Point.

"Sure, an' there's no use in going any further," said McSweeny. "It's darker than ever I see it—listen to that, now! It seems as if the whole sky was coming down."

It was a fearful crash of thunder, indeed, and the lightning flash which preceded it had been most vivid. The rain was falling in torrents, and it really did seem as if it was useless to continue the search.

"Let's go inside here and wait a few moments," said Tom. "This rain can't last forever."

"Hist, lad! Hist! I heard something moving about in there," breathed McSweeny, suddenly catching Tom's arm.

Tom listened, his heart coming up in his throat.

"It's the tiger fast enough!" he breathed.

"Howly mother! D'ye mane it?"

"I do. Don't you hear him walking up and down?"

"What's to be done? Sure we can't go in there."

"I can—I will. All I want is to get my eye on him."

"But he can't see you in the dark. Sure, it's nothing for you, though. You're used to going into the cage. I've seen ye do it many a time."

"I can do nothing unless he can see me and I can see him. We must have a light."

"I have me dark lantern—would that do any good?"

"It's the very thing; get it out, quick. We are losing time. He may take it into his head to spring out upon us at any moment."

McSweeny's hand trembled so that he could scarcely hold the lantern, but at last he got it lighted and Tom directed him to stand behind him and throw the light into the shed when he pushed the door open.

"Should he spring out, jump to the right," he said. "It will give you time to retreat into the shed which will be the safest place."

"Saints preserve us! This is the worst job I ever had!" groaned McSweeny, but he stood firm.

Tom then walked up to the door and boldly pushed it in.

At the same instant a blinding flash of lightning illuminated the heavens.

It showed Tom the tiger crouching for a spring.

"Rajah! Rajah!" called the boy, fixing his eye upon the big beast.

He might have succeeded, but the sight was too much for McSweeny.

He dropped the lantern and fled, while Rajah with one spring leaped upon Tom.

## CHAPTER X.

### THE RESCUE OF RAJAH.

When Rajah, the tiger, knocked down Tom Terry at the door of the old shed, the boy was nearer death than he realized until it was all over.

Tom went down backward, and this brought Rajah's face close to his.

Then our hero did a wonderful thing—so wonderful that we almost hesitate to tell it.

At that very moment a blinding flash of lightning illuminated the heavens, and by its light Tom caught the tiger with his iron eye.

It was only for an instant, but in that instant Tom remembered that the tiger, like a cat, could see in the dark.

He threw the whole force of his will out toward the savage brute, commanding him inwardly to crouch at his feet, trusting to the fact that although he could not see the tiger's eye, the tiger could see his.

And Tom accomplished his purpose!

Rajah with a savage snarl obeyed him.

Instead of burying his fearful fangs in the boy's throat, he crouched at his feet and let Tom slip one noose about his neck and another over his jaws.

The work was done and Tom sprang to his feet in triumph; but, of course, the tiger was yet to be secured in his cage, and that alone was something which few would have cared to undertake.

But Tom was quite equal to the task.

Speaking soothing words to the tiger, he backed into the shed and managed to tie the rope around one of the four posts which held up the roof.

Rajah lay at his feet, purring like a kitten.

Of course, if he had chosen to exert his full strength, he could have pulled the shed down upon them both; but he made no such attempt, and Tom could only hope that he would not make it.

He then went out, and closing the door, picked up the policeman's lantern and lighted it, for it had been extinguished by the fall.

"McSweeny!" he called. "Oh, Mr. McSweeny!"

"Sure, and here I am!" replied a voice from the darkness and McSweeny appeared from behind one of the sand hills.

"Is it alive you are?" he exclaimed. "Heaven be praised for that! Where's the tiger? I don't see him nowhere, now."

"That's because he's tied up in the shed," said Tom, quietly. "Hurry back to my place, McSweeny, and tell Mr. Potts to hire a truck and come down here with the cage. He must do it, no matter what difficulties there are in the way, and you must help him. I shan't forget what I owe to you, McSweeny, once we get the tiger safely back."

This sent Tom's ally flying back to the shanty, and so

promptly did Arthur Potts act, that in less than half an hour a big double truck came lumbering through the sand.

Arthur Potts came with it, and so did McSweeny, and there were six or eight men beside the driver, all ready to help Tom out.

But to get the tiger back into the cage Tom needed no help and would accept none.

So far not a sound had been heard from Rajah. When Tom opened the door and flashed the lantern in, he saw the tiger lay in precisely the same position, apparently asleep, but the big green eyes opened as he looked, and Tom realized that everything depended upon himself.

Meanwhile, the cage had been removed from the truck and placed in front of the shed door with its door wide open.

Arthur Potts now took the lantern, and Tom, fixing his iron eye upon the tiger, proceeded to untie the rope, and then backed slowly into the cage calling Rajah to follow.

The men watched him breathlessly. It was beautifully done. Rajah arose, stretched himself, and purring loudly, followed Tom into the cage, all without making the least objection.

But the moment he was actually out, and the door was secured, the beast flew into a fearful rage.

He threw himself against the bars, spit and snarled, and made things highly interesting for the men, who had yet to get the cage on the truck.

But Arthur Potts had provided for all this.

He and Tom threw a heavy tarpaulin over the cage and secured it to the side.

It was all right then.

Once Rajah could no longer see the strangers, he lay down and went to sleep, and in a short time he was back in the shanty, and Tom found himself minus a lot of money, but otherwise no damage done.

"Never again will I leave during business hours," he declared to Arthur. "Just think of what might have happened! Of what has happened! Oh, Arthur, I would rather have lost the tiger than that boy. What can have become of him? I'm afraid we'll never see him again."

"Don't give it up, Mr. Terry," said Arthur. "My theory is that he chased that black scoundrel, Ram What's-his-name. He'll be back again, don't you fret. I hope you don't blame me for what has happened? I declare I never let him in."

"He never went out. He was hidden behind the cage all the time," said Tom, guessing the truth; "no, I don't blame you, Arthur, I blame myself for being away from business; but this thing has taught me a lesson. I'm afraid we haven't heard the last of it yet. We shall be ordered off the island next we know."

But it all turned out much better than Tom anticipated.

Arthur Potts slept in the shanty that night to keep Tom company.

They did not retire until nearly midnight, and in the meantime Tom was out inquiring of everybody if they had seen the hairy boy.

No one could help him, for no one had any information to give.

Tom turned in with a despairing heart.

He knew "Tiger's" sensitive nature and his great fear was that the boy had jumped into the sea and drowned himself, from sheer chagrin at allowing the misfortune to occur.

But this fear was entirely without foundation.

When Tom awoke it was daylight, and he could hear some one sweeping the showroom outside.

This was Tiger's duty.

Tom sprang up, and pushing aside the curtain saw, to his great joy, the Toda boy engaged at his usual work.

The instant he caught sight of Tom, Tiger threw down his

broom, and dropped on his hands and knees, crawling up to his master, and kissing his feet.

"Oh, sahib, sahib! Beat me, beat me!" he cried. "Tiger bad! Tiger very bad! All him fault! Ram let Rajah out of cage!"

## CHAPTER XI.

### THE WIND-UP OF THE CONEY ISLAND SHOW.

"Get up, Tiger! None of that nonsense! Where in the world have you been?"

Thus saying, Tom stooped down, and grasping the Toda boy by the shoulders, raised him to his feet.

Poor Tiger was crying like a baby, the tears streaming down his hairy cheeks.

It took Tom at least ten minutes to quiet him, and when at last he did it, he was not a bit surprised to find out that the poor fellow had been hiding under the floor of the shanty all the time, something which it was easy enough to do, for the little building stood on four posts driven into the sand.

It was several days before Tiger recovered his former spirits, for he seemed determined to take the whole blame of the affair to himself.

Meanwhile everything went along swimmingly. The chief of police called upon Tom, it is true, warning him to be more careful with the tiger, but there the matter was dropped and the little show went on just the same as usual.

Business was splendid.

For several weeks Tom just coined money.

Every debt was paid, and a respectable bank account began rolling up, Tom religiously depositing a certain sum to the account of Tiger. This he felt to be but right.

But one thing occurred to mar Tom's happiness, and that was his failure to see anything further of Miss Minnie Meldrum.

About a week after the escape of Rajah Tom received a note from Mr. Meldrum, saying that business had unexpectedly called him to Europe and Minnie was to accompany him; adding that it would be necessary to postpone any further discussion of his proposition to set Tom up in the menagerie business until his return.

But for this part Tom cared very little.

He felt that he had rather fight his own battles, and he did not like the idea of running in debt on another man's scheme.

So he just stuck to business at Coney Island, and when, late in September, the season closed, Tom found himself the possessor of several thousand dollars.

It had been a splendid season, and he had made a big success.

"What we do now, sahib? People no come see Rajah no more," sighed Tiger, one cold, rainy day in September, when up to four o'clock only six persons had entered the show-room.

"Yes," said Arthur Potts, who was warming his feet by the stove, when Tom had set up on Rajah's account, "what's to be done now? I suppose my name is Mud by the end of the week."

"Well, I don't know that it is, Arthur," replied Tom, quietly. "There ought to be room somewhere to show the tiger this winter."

"Have you thought about it? You never leave the island, you know, and that's why I ask."

"Well, there's a mail down here, I suppose. I do get a letter once in a while, even if I am only a poor showman," laughed Tom.

"Oh! Then you've been corresponding with managers. Are

you going into a menagerie, or a dime museum or a variety show?"

"Well, now, you ask me too much, but I'll admit that I've had several offers, although none of them are to my mind. I'd like to travel, and I don't want to go into a Bowery museum if I can help it, but, in any case, I shall try to keep you with me, for you have served me faithfully and—hold on, Arthur, there's someone at the door."

Arthur dropped the chair in which he had been tilting back and sprang to his feet.

A little man, with a very wet umbrella and a terribly red face, was standing in the doorway.

"Can I see the tiger?" he asked, "or isn't the show on?"

"Of course it's on for anybody who wants to look at it," replied Tom, cheerfully. "Walk right in, sir. Give me your umbrella. Take a seat there by the fire and dry your feet."

"You're very kind," replied the stranger. "What's the admission fee?"

"Oh, nothing at all," replied Tom, "it really isn't worth talking about."

"But I'd rather pay. I want to see the whole show, if you please. I want you to go through with your act with that young What-is-it. I suppose five dollars will give me a private exhibition, for that's what it's likely to be."

"No, it won't," replied Tom, "but twenty-five cents will. If you want to see the show we are here to show it, and I want you to understand that there is no gauge game in this shop. Arthur, take the gentleman's money; no matter about the ticket. Now, then, sit just where you are, sir, and make yourself comfortable, and Tiger and I will get ready to go on."

Now, see how little it costs to be civil, and what sometimes comes of it.

Tom did what he did, purely from a sense of right.

He felt that so long as he was open the little man had a right to see the show, and he went through the whole programme from beginning to end, even to entering the tiger's cage.

No trouble about that part of the business now.

Long practice had made Tom perfect. He could control Rajah with his iron eye as easily as he could have controlled a willing dog.

The little man watched the whole proceeding in silence, never applauding or changing his position by the stove.

When it was all over he called to Tom:

"Come out here, young man, as soon as you have put your clothes on. I want to have a talk with you."

"I'll bet a hat he's a manager," whispered Arthur Potts, coming in behind the curtain. "Go slow, Tom,"—Arthur was growing familiar now—"and don't forget me, for there's nothing I'd like better than to go on the road with you this winter."

Tom was all in a flutter.

Truth told he had been feeling considerably worried about the future, for the offers he had received so far were not to be considered, so he hurried on his clothes and came out, joining the little man by the stove.

"Look here, Mr. Terry, my name is Bertrano," said the man. "I'm organizing a traveling vaudeville company on a large scale, and intend making a complete tour of the United States. One of my people spoke to me about your show and thought it would be a novelty. I have now seen it and I agree with him. I would like to engage you if we can come to terms."

"For the winter?" asked Tom.

"Until June first next. Don't strike too high. My means are limited, but I can give you references and security, if necessary. I'll pay all I agree."

"I want fifty dollars a week for the Toda boy and the same for myself, and twenty-five for my assistant, Mr. Potts," re-

plied Tom, quietly. "And I want to say right here that these are my lowest terms."

"Humph! Got any other offer?"

"That is entirely my business, sir."

"I admit it. I'll go a hundred and furnish an assistant. We don't need your man."

"We don't go without him," replied Tom, and from that moment Arthur, who was listening at the door, became our hero's warm friend.

"I say we don't need him," persisted Bertrano, "but if you insist I suppose it has got to be."

"You accept?"

"Yes."

"Of course you pay all expenses. We want the salaries clear."

"Of course. That's understood. I know it seems low to you, but you must remember that you can't have Coney Island business all the year round. Your act is a clever one, and the hairy boy a decided novelty. Call at this address to-morrow and we'll draw up a contract. We open in Bridgeport, Connecticut, next Monday, so you want to be on hand."

Whereupon Mr. Bertrano gave Tom a card, bearing the name and address of a firm of lawyers, and departed in the rain.

"Hooray! By Jove, that was done slick, and I'm ever and ever so much obliged to you!" cried Arthur Potts, bouncing in as soon as he had gone.

Tom felt proud and happy, but after all he had not been very shrewd, for as he afterward had reason to know, Manager Bertrano had come prepared to offer him double that amount.

And that night saw the wind-up of the Coney Island show.

## CHAPTER XII.

### ON THE ROAD.

Promptly at the appointed time next morning Tom presented himself at the lawyer's office, and the contract was regularly signed, sealed and delivered.

Mr. Bertrano had every opportunity to get the best of the boy, who acted entirely without advice, but he was an honest man, and had no such intention. In fact, he had taken a strong liking to Tom.

Returning to the island, Tom explained the situation to Tiger, and they packed up, settled their small debts and prepared to depart.

They left on Sunday afternoon, Rajah being hauled over to the freight house of the New Haven Railroad and deposited in one of Mr. Bertrano's special cars.

At eleven o'clock the train left the Grand Central station, and Tom and Arthur were introduced to their new friends.

There was a fire king and a tattooed man and a professional juggler, besides several other stars in various special lines.

Tom noticed that nearly all the ladies painted and that the gentlemen wore decidedly flashy clothes, but they seemed to be very nice sort of folks for all that, and they had a jolly time on the way to Bridgeport, where upon their arrival they put up at the Atlantic Hotel.

The next six weeks were in some respects the pleasantest of Tom's life.

He found it a great deal more agreeable to be associated with others, and to do his act before a respectable audience in a brilliantly lighted theater, than to follow up the slavish labor of the little show on the beach.

He did his turn just after the fire king, Rajah being wheeled on to the stage in a new and gayly painted cage.

The audience held their breath when the brave boy entered behind the bars and put the big beast through his tricks, and poor little Tiger always came in for his share of the applause.

Business was fine at Bridgeport, and the New Haven stand was a huge success.

It was not so good at Hartford, and the Springfield stand was a positive loss, but it was made up for by an overwhelming success at Worcester, and at last the company found themselves in Boston, located in a big museum on Tremont Row.

Here they were to stay three weeks, and flaming posters representing Tom in the tiger's cage were spread around, together with a full length picture of the Toda, showing him with a face like an orang-outang which seemed to tickle the poor boy's fancy greatly, and he would persist in stopping to admire these bills when he and Tom passed back and forth from their hotel.

The first night at the museum there was an enormous crowd, and the crush continued all the week.

At last came Saturday night, and the crowd was bigger than ever.

Signor Bizani, the fire king, was on, and Tom was standing in readiness to do his turn, when Mr. Bertrano came up, looking redder in the face than ever, and smelling a little stronger of whisky, which was natural, for he was always full of it, although it never seemed to affect him at all.

"Mr. Terry," he said, "this is great. There never was such business, and do you know I lay it all to your door, for every one is talking about you. Not that it makes any difference to me, boy. Our engagement here is for an upset price, but I think we shall take a place of our own as soon as it is over. Can you raise any money? I'd like to break that contract and have you go in with me as a partner. Five thousand would do it, and—and—and——"

What was the matter with Mr. Bertrano?

All of a sudden his speech seemed to fail him. He staggered and would have fallen if Tom had not caught him in his arms.

"Great Heavens!" cried the fire king, who had just come off, "it has come at last. Apoplexy! I knew it! And not a cent in the treasury, all swallowed up by those infernal debts! This ends our picnic, boys!"

So much Tom heard, but no more, for come life or come death he had to go on and do his turn.

It was a wonder that he was able to control Rajah that time, for his thoughts were elsewhere, Manager Bertrano's last words were whirling through his brain.

"Oh, Tom! he's dead!" said Arthur, as soon as Tom came off the little stage. "The doctor says it's a case of too much whisky. Anyhow he's gone."

It was a hard blow to the little company.

Within an hour Tom knew the worst.

Mr. Bertrano was deeply in debt, and working on borrowed money.

Notes were due the following week; if they could not be met the company would have no alternative but to disband, as in face they would probably have to do anyhow, as it was entirely uncertain who was to control the dead manager's estate.

This was Saturday night at half-past ten, there was to be no show the next day, of course.

Tom called Arthur aside.

"Look here," he said, "this is a sad affair, but we've got to look out for ourselves. Can you look after things till Monday morning, old man?"

"Why, of course I can," replied Arthur; "but what are you driving at, Tom?"

"Business," replied Tom. "I'm going to New York. I'm going to start for the train right now."

"To New York! What for?"

"Don't give it away, Arthur."

"You bet I won't, Tom."

"Then here it is. I'm going for money. This is my chance. I'm going into the show business again for myself."

In less than an hour Tom was being whirled away toward New York.

### CHAPTER XIII.

#### TOM TRIES HIS IRON EYE ON A MAN.

When Tom Terry reached New York he went to a restaurant for breakfast, and then set out to transact the business which had brought him so hurriedly on from the East.

It was a bold scheme, and one which few men situated as Tom was would have cared to undertake.

But Tom was shrewd and cool-headed, and as full of enterprise as possible.

Much as he regretted the death of Mr. Bertrano, who certainly had been most kind and fair with him, he saw no reason why he should not take advantage of the situation to pull himself up another round on the ladder of fortune if he could do it, and he thought he could.

But it was Sunday, a poor day to transact business anywhere, especially in New York.

This, however, did not scare Tom a bit. He had fully made up his mind to return to Boston that night under any circumstances.

"I'll either do it to-day or I won't do it at all," he said. "If I fail I'll drop the scheme cold."

Perhaps this was not altogether wise, but it was Tom's way of reasoning, and all we can do is to tell what he did.

First it was to go to a drug store and look at a directory. Then he made all possible haste to a certain number on Sixty-third street, west.

It was a handsome brownstone dwelling, and the lace curtains at the window seemed to indicate a good deal of style, but Tom boldly ascended the stoop and rang the bell.

"I wish to see Mr. Carman," he said to the servant, handing in a blank card upon which he had written his name.

"I don't think he is up yet," said the man, doubtfully. "Have you an appointment with him?"

"No," replied Tom, "but I must see him. Tell him I am one of the depositors in the Nineteenth National Bank and must see him on business of the utmost importance. I won't detain him long."

The man shut the door and left Tom standing on the steps, but when, after a few moments he opened it again, he showed the boy into a handsomely furnished library civilly enough. "Mr. Carman will be down soon," he said.

When Mr. Carman entered the room in his handsome dressing gown and slippers, Tom's heart almost failed him, for the man's face wore a sour, forbidding look.

"Well, what do you want?" he asked, shortly. "I don't do bank business on Sunday. Talk quick!"

"Then you are the cashier of the Nineteenth National—I have made no mistake?"

"None at all. Tell your business. I haven't had my breakfast yet."

This was all very discouraging, and Tom's courage was oozing away, when suddenly an odd idea popped into his head.

"If I can control a tiger with my eye perhaps I can control a man," was what flashed over him. He fixed his eye upon Mr. Carman, and throwing out the whole force of his will power tried it again.

"Mr. Carman, I want you to listen to me just a moment," he said, firmly. "I have something like twenty-five hundred dollars on deposit in your bank."

"I don't know anything about that. Can't expect me to know every depositor in our bank."

"I don't; but the books will show. I am connected with Bertrano's International Vaudevilles, a respectable variety company now performing in Boston. I am the owner of a Bengal tiger, which has made a lot of money for myself and the show. Last night Mr. Bertrano dropped dead, and I understand the company will have to disband. We are making money rapidly. I want to go on with the business. The matter has to be decided at once. I shall want at least four thousand dollars, and I want the bank to advance fifteen hundred on my note."

Would Mr. Carman have listened to all this if Tom had not kept his iron eye fixed upon him?

It is hard to say.

At all events he did listen through to the end.

"Well, upon my word, if this is not the most amazing proposition I ever had made to me!" he exclaimed; but he sat down as he said it and looked at Tom fixedly. Somehow he did not seem to be able to get away from the boy's gaze.

"What security do you offer for this loan?" he asked.

"A chattle mortgage on my tiger," replied Tom, promptly. "He's worth easily three thousand dollars, and I wouldn't take five for him as matters stand. I'll give you full particulars and you can wire Boston and verify them in the morning. Of course I don't expect to get any money now."

"I should hope not! Young man, the Nineteenth National don't loan money on tigers nor on notes of the sort you propose to give. Still you seem to be an enterprising sort of fellow, and I don't want to discourage you. My breakfast is not ready yet. Go on and tell me more about our plans."

Now, this was just what Tom wanted. Certainly his iron eye—or his frank, earnest manner—had broken down the barrier between them, and he now launched out and told his whole story in such an animated way that Mr. Carman could not help being interested.

"Upon my word, I believe you would succeed, and would pay back the money if the bank were to loan it to you," he said. "but it is quite impossible. There is only one way, and that is for you to get a good endorser on your note—by the way, how long a time do you want it to run?"

"Say six months, sir. I could surely pay it then; I'm certain I could."

"And the interest?"

"I'll pay ten per cent."

Mr. Carman ran his hand through his hair. Tom still kept his eyes fixed upon him.

"Do it! Do it! You must do it!" he kept saying to himself. It was very strange.

In a moment Mr. Carman said:

"I feel as though I must help you, Mr. Terry, although it is entirely against my judgment, and there's no business in it, of course. The bank cannot advance you a cent, but I will let you have the amount you name, personally, providing that you can prove your statements and give me a good name on the back of the paper. I am, however, no usurer, and seven per cent. is all the interest I ask."

"Thank you, sir," said Tom, quietly. "I will give you the names of the managers of the museum in Boston where we are at present performing. They will corroborate my statements. As to the endorser I can only try for it. How would the firm of Meldrum & Co. do?"

"Admirably. Give me their name on the back of the paper, and the money is at your service at any time."

"Can I see you this afternoon?"

"No; but I shall be home by six o'clock."

"I will call not later than six; or rather if I fail to get the endorser I will not come at all. If you don't see me you may know that I've given it up."

"Very well. I wish you success, young man. You are plucky and enterprising. You deserve to succeed."

"Thank you, sir," said Tom, quietly, and he bowed himself out without another word.

His heart was full of hope when he reached the sidewalk. Had his iron eye helped him? Perhaps. But the battle was only half won.

Tom now hurried downtown and soon found himself ringing the bell of another brownstone house on west Twenty-third street. The name Dusenbury was on the door.

"What! What! My tiger friend!" cried Mr. Meldrum's versatile partner when Tom introduced himself. "What in the world brings you here?"

Tom explained.

No trouble in getting an audience here.

The result was not only surprising, but most gratifying.

"Look here," said Mr. Dusenbury, when he had finished his story, "you have got me where the hair is short, so to speak. Meldrum & Co. never endorse, but in your case I shall have to make an exception, for my orders are to advance you any sum you may ask for up to five thousand dollars, on what I consider a good business proposition for your own interest, and I can't deny that this fills the bill."

"Did Mr. Meldrum leave such orders?" asked Tom, much moved.

"He did. It was the last thing he said before leaving for Europe. I tell you, young man, you are fortunate in having such a friend as Miss Minnie; of course, it is all done on her account."

"Then you'll endorse my note, sir?"

"I've got to. Can't help myself; or I'll give you the money just as you wish."

"I prefer the endorsement. It is more businesslike."

"You are right. How's the tiger?"

"He's first rate."

"And the hairy boy? Ha! Ha! Ha! I always think of Barnum's What-is-it, who used to be exhibited before you were born. How's he?"

"As well as possible. But how shall I arrange the details of this business, Mr. Dusenbury?"

"Don't arrange them. Go to some good Boston bank and state your case and act under their advice. Good-by, Tom! I'm going to church. It's very wicked to talk business on Sunday. Give my regards to the What-is-it. Ha! Ha! Ha!"

Was there any prouder or happier young man on the Owl train for Boston that Sunday night than Tom Terry?

We doubt it.

Next morning Tom was at his post ready to go on in the continuous performance.

All the members of the company were away down in the dumps, for it was rumored that Mr. Bertrano's executors had decided that the show must disband.

But no one knew that Tom had been to New York except Arthur Potts, and his head was almost too big for his hat.

"Say, Tom, am I to be general manager?" he whispered, when Tom came off the stage.

"Hush!" breathed Tom. "Don't holler till we're out of the woods, Arthur."

"What! What! Why, Tom, there ain't a tree in sight—you've cleared them all away. We'll make our fortunes as sure as fate."

"Here's a friend worth having," thought Tom. "Arthur is just as much interested as if it was all to be his own."

In his modesty, Tom seemed to have forgotten that it was all his own doings.

Stand by your friends, boys, and they will stand by you.

Tom has proved this.

That was what was the matter with Arthur Potts.

## CHAPTER XIV.

### BUSINESS.

"It's all up, Terry," said Signor Bizani, the fire king, disconsolately, a few days after Mr. Bertrano's funeral, meeting Tom on Tremont Row, as the latter was hurrying to the museum to do his turn.

"What's up?" asked Tom, quietly.

"The jig, the game, our chances. The International Vaudevilles are going to disband. I struck the museum manager for an engagement this morning, but he's got a Dutch fire king coming in two weeks and he wouldn't listen to me. I'm out of a job, and the rest of us are in the same boat."

"Dear me! Is that so?" exclaimed Tom. "Then the orders have come from New York."

"Yes, came last night. But we can't stop to talk here. Jo-Jo is drawing a crowd."

Everybody called Tiger "Jo-Jo," and everybody stopped and stared at him in the street as they were doing now.

It was most annoying to Tom, but Tiger liked it. He never said anything, but just smiled and looked from face to face as he was doing now.

"Let's get on to the museum," said Tom. "Look here, Bizani, how would you like to take an engagement with me?"

"With you?"

"Yes."

"What do you mean?"

"I'm going to open a place of my own next week."

"You are? Where?"

"On Hanover street. Boston suits me well enough for the present. Later I may go on the road if I can get the dates, and I guess I can."

"This is a surprise. I didn't know——"

"That I had the sand? Well, if you come with me you'll get your pay all right, Bizani. Same salary. Permanent engagement. I want the tattooed man, and——" here Tom named different members of the company—"tell them, will you? It will save me the trouble. I want to close my list before night. You can send them to Mr. Potts."

"Great Scott! You take my breath away."

"Do you accept?"

"Why, yes. I suppose so."

"You don't have to. I've no doubt I can get the Dutch fire king after they are through with him at the museum."

"Consider it a bargain, dear boy," said Bizani, hastily. "If you don't pay you'll be no worse than lots of others, and——"

Here they entered the museum and the manager who was standing in the doorway caught Tom by the arm.

"I want to speak to you a minute, Terry," he said.

He drew Tom into his private office and closing the door offered the boy a six weeks' engagement on the same terms Mr. Bertrano had paid.

"Couldn't think of it," replied Tom, shaking his head.

"But your engagement is broken. Bertrano's business is to be closed out at once; word came last night."

"I understand that; still I must say no."

"Pshaw! I'll give you two hundred and twenty-five dollars a week; that's a hundred for yourself and the same for the hairy boy. Potts' salary to be continued. Bertrano told me

he meant to pay you that when he first engaged you. I'll give it now."

"No, sir," replied Tom, emphatically.

"Got any other engagement?"

"No."

"Then what do you want?"

"You can't hire me on any terms. I'm going in for myself."

"Not here, I hope?"

"You'll probably learn my plans later," said Tom, quietly, "but excuse me now. I must get ready for my turn."

Tom and Tiger went through with their act in their usual thorough style, giving the usual satisfaction to the audience, which, at that hour, was always small.

When Tom came off the stage he met Arthur Potts somewhat excited.

"Look here, Tom, is it all settled?" he asked. "Half the company have been striking me for engagements. They say you are going to open a place down on Hanover street, but you haven't said a word to me."

"Because I don't holler till I'm out of the woods," replied Tom. "Yes, Arthur, it's all settled. I've got five thousand dollars to my credit in the Boylston Bank, and the lease of the place is in my pocket. It will take about a week to fit up a stage and get things started. Here's a list of the people I want. Engage them at their present salaries, or not at all. As for yourself——"

"Hold on, Tom. I don't want any raise. I'm doing well enough as it is."

"Your salary will be fifty dollars a week, Arthur——"

"Stop where you are. I won't have it."

"Hear me out! Fifty dollars a week, and not a penny less."

"I say no! 'Tain't right."

"Will you listen? Just as soon as my debts are paid and the business warrants, it goes. Until then I draw only our living expenses."

"That's business, Tom. I accept. I'm very grateful to you."

"Don't say a word, Arthur. When business booms for me it booms for you. I only wish I could make Tiger some return."

"You can't, Tom. He knows no more of the value of money than a big dog would. All he wants is to be with you."

"And that he shall always be," said Tom, emphatically. "He's my mascot, Arthur."

"Yes, so he is," laughed Arthur, "and that's business, too."

## CHAPTER XV.

### THAT AWFUL NIGHT IN CHICAGO.

The next week was a busy one—perhaps the busiest week Tom Terry had ever put in.

He closed at the Tremont Row Museum on Saturday night, and between midnight and morning moved Rajah's cage down to the vacant store on Hanover street, which he had hired.

Arthur and Tiger went with him, and that night they rolled themselves in blankets and lay on the floor before the cage, for it was the rule that either Tom or Arthur should always be near the valuable brute, and hitherto they had taken turns in sleeping at the hotel.

Next morning they went to work with a will.

Carpenters were brought in and a stage constructed with a little green room behind, and a living room where all three were to sleep.

There were seats to be bought and put in place, and decorating to be done, and a big transparency to be painted. Lights

had to be put in; there was printing and advertising to be arranged for, and a thousand and one minor things.

Poor Tiger could not do much but laugh and look on—except to sweep. This he seemed to regard as his special business, and he bothered the carpenters half to death by persisting in raising a dust in season and out. Not a shaving fell but Tiger was there to sweep it up, and he grew wild with rage if any one attempted to interfere with the exercise of his broom.

Every day Signor Bizani or some other member of the company would drop in to see how things were progressing, and it is hardly necessary to state that such as had been engaged, most heartily wished the boy manager every success.

At last came Saturday night, and, all being ready, the show opened promptly at seven o'clock.

This was a red letter night. Tom has never forgotten it. The place was packed until he closed his doors, just before twelve o'clock.

On that occasion Tom went into Rajah's cage nine times, and always to the immense delight of the crowd.

"By gracious, if it keeps up like this, Coney Island won't be in it," declared Arthur, after the doors were closed.

And it did, with some slight variations. There were good days and bad days, of course, but the general average was all that could be asked for. The winter drifted on and March came. On the first day of that windy month Tom paid his note away ahead of time.

He felt like a new man when he received a short business-like letter from Mr. Carman, congratulating him on his success.

"We'll stick it out another month, Arthur, and then go direct to Chicago," declared Tom. "I want to try the West before the season closes and there ain't time to look up dates."

So Tom wrote to a reliable party in Chicago and engaged a place, giving directions to have it ready for him by the first of April.

He laid aside the necessary money to cover the expenses of moving, and, as his lease expired on the first of the month, he was all ready to go.

The journey was accomplished without any serious difficulty. A freight car was chartered, and Tom, Arthur and Tiger rode with Rajah all the way.

They opened on April 6th on Clark street above Van Buren, and for two weeks did even a better business than they had done in Boston, although their rent was somewhat higher, which added to the expense account.

Now, all this time nothing had been seen or heard of Ram Jemborree, and Tom had almost ceased to think of the Lascar.

One rainy night Tom closed his place rather earlier than usual, for business had been very quiet and there were not over half a dozen people in at eleven o'clock.

Arthur was away that evening, having gone over on the North Side to see an old friend whom he had known in New York, and Tom had to attend to matters himself with Tiger's help, for they never allowed any outsider to have anything to do with Rajah.

When the tiger had been fed and everything settled for the night, Tom turned in upon his cot and was soon fast asleep.

Now, as a rule, Tom never dreamed, but that night he did. He dreamed that he was a fireman and was trying to rescue Tiger from a burning building. The place was full of smoke, and he was groping his way about, trying to find the hairy boy, calling: "Tiger! Tiger!" again and again.

He was calling thus when he suddenly awoke, coughing and strangling.

It was no dream! It was real! The room was black with smoke, and somewhere out in front he could hear the crackling of burning wood!

An awful fear came over the boy, as he leaped from his cot. The place was surely on fire and there was Tiger to be saved and Rajah's big cage to be taken out.

"I'm ruined!" thought Tom. "Heavens, this is terrible! Tiger! Tiger! Wake up, Tiger! Fire! Fire! Fire! Wake up!"

There was no answer.

The light usually kept burning through the night had been extinguished. Tom could not see a thing.

Hastily pulling on his trousers, he struck a match and staggered toward the gas burner.

There was no trouble in lighting it, but the sickly flame made but a slight impression on that black strangling smoke.

Yet it enabled Tom to see that Tiger's cot was empty, and—at first he could not believe it, but yes! It was so—Rajah's cage was no longer tenanted. The door stood open—the tiger was gone!

Tom staggered toward the cage overcome with horror.

"The tiger's out! He's killed the boy!" he thought. "Oh, how has all this happened? Who has been at work here?"

He knew that it never could have come about by accident, but there was no time to speculate upon the cause, for the smoke was growing more and more dense every instant.

Breaking for the door which led into his little auditorium, Tom forced it open.

A sea of flame burst upon him.

The whole place was in a blaze.

"I must get back!" he gasped. "Good Heavens! If I save my own life I shall do well."

He rushed for the rear door which opened on the alley, the flames sweeping after him, licking up everything in their path.

But even this avenue of escape was cut off.

The door was locked. The key which ought to have been on the inside had vanished.

"Heaven help me! This is the Lascar's work!" groaned poor Tom.

"Help! Help!" he shouted, hearing voices in the alley. "Help! Help!"

And then he began to beat wildly upon the door.

But the sounds died away, and now only the awful roar of the flames could be heard.

Still Tom persisted.

"Help! Help! Save me!" he cried, throwing his whole weight against the door.

## CHAPTER XVI.

### TIGER HUNTING BY TELEPHONE.

It was the crisis of Tom Terry's life when he stood there beating on the door.

The flames were close behind him, and Tom's strength was almost gone.

The boy's brain was reeling. He choked and strangled; to endure this horrible situation any longer was beyond his power.

Once more Tom called for help, but this time the cry was feeble.

He threw out his hands, reeled backward and measured his length on the floor.

Talk of narrow escapes! Well, here was one! Tom would surely have perished in the flames if help had not come then just as it did.

At that same instant a pounding on the outside of the door began.

No feeble blows, either.

Stout axes were beating against the door, loud shouts were heard in the alley, and then all in a moment the door came crashing in.

"Here's somebody!" exclaimed a stalwart fireman, who rushed into the room in the lead of half a dozen men.

They had arrived just in time.

Tom was tenderly raised and carried out into the alley.

The poor boy was entirely unconscious. The shouts of the men, the roar of the fire engines, the clanging of the ambulance, rattling through the Chicago streets.

He tried to rise, but the young doctor in charge of the ambulance pushed him gently back.

"Don't disturb yourself; it's all right, my boy," he said, kindly, when Tom tried to talk.

It was all right, so far as Tom was concerned, when he awoke next day snugly tucked in the hospital bed.

All right, so far as his bodily health went, so the doctor declared, but Tom's mind was dreadfully disturbed.

His eager questions brought only vague answers. A fire in the great metropolis of the West is only an incident.

Neither doctor nor nurse knew much about it.

Tom was wild with anxiety.

He wanted to get right up and go about his business, but the doctor insisted that he should remain in the hospital through the day.

Finding that this order was not to be disregarded, Tom compromised by telegraphing for Arthur Potts to come to him, but before he could get the message off, Arthur himself walked into the ward.

It was a sad meeting.

Arthur was so excited that he could scarcely speak.

"Oh, Tom! How did all this happen?" he gasped out.

"Wait," said Tom, quietly. "We want a private room, Arthur. We don't talk over business here."

It was easily arranged, for Tom had plenty of money with him, as the hospital people well knew, since they had taken charge of it.

Once alone his story was soon told.

Arthur explained how he had come down to business early to find the front of the showroom boarded up and the place in charge of a policeman, with Signor Bizani and several other members of the company standing around in deep despair.

But Arthur had no information to give about Rajah or Tiger.

The empty cage had been found in the room after the fire was extinguished, but the big tiger and the Toda boy had disappeared.

"This is more of Ram Jemborree's work, of course," said Arthur, after they began to consider the case calmly. "Don't you think so, Tom?"

"I do, most decidedly," replied Tom. "I believe I was chloroformed and left there to meet my fate; but look here, Arthur, it is just impossible that the tiger could be removed from that building, and no one know anything about it. Go right down to police headquarters and report the case; see what can be done about it; find out what they know and come back to me."

Arthur hurried off, but Tom knew all about it long before he came back.

Indeed he was scarcely out of the hospital when a police captain and the chief of the fire department called to question Tom about the affair.

From these gentlemen the boy learned all he wanted to know.

The information was of the utmost importance.

It appeared that shortly after midnight a dark, swarthy man, accompanied by two others, accosted the policeman on

the beat and stated that they were sent by Tom to remove the tiger.

As such things are usually done at night, the policeman thought nothing of it. Indeed, he stood by in the alley when the big truck came and saw the dark man unlock the door, and remained there while the tiger was transferred to another cage which was placed across the doorway to receive him.

The most astonishing part of it was that the dark man had unhesitatingly entered the cage in the showroom and led the tiger out, the big beast submitting like a lamb.

Naturally enough the policeman suspected nothing under the circumstances. He was told that he had better stay at the door, and he did so.

He saw the tiger safely installed in the new cage, and the cage lifted upon the truck which immediately drove away.

But he had seen nothing of the hairy Toda boy nor of Tom, the last being natural enough since he did not enter the place.

"Well, well, well! That officer ought to have a leather medal struck in his honor!" declared the police captain, when Tom told his story. "He's a disgrace to the force. There's no doubt whatever that those scoundrels had already been in there and chloroformed you, and taken away that freak of yours into the bargain. This is the worst I've heard in a long while."

"Let it drop as far as the officer is concerned," said Tom, who was perfectly cool now. "He had no reason to suspect that he was dealing with one of the shrewdest scoundrels unhung. Even if he had entered the place, it is doubtful if he would have seen me. I found myself all rolled up in the bed clothes when I woke up."

"But how about the fire?" asked the chief, suspiciously. "How do you explain that?"

"I can't explain it," replied Tom, "but look here, I haven't a cent of insurance. Never could get any on my tiger. That ought to satisfy you that it was none of my doings."

"Oh, we don't suspect you for an instant," declared the captain, and soon after they withdrew, having promised Tom that every effort should be made to trace the movements of the truck.

But their help was not needed.

Soon Arthur Potts came back, full of the information he had obtained.

"Say, Tom," he exclaimed, as soon as they were alone, "I'm on to it now. After I left police headquarters I thought it would be a good idea to work the telephone, and the result was great."

"On the railroads, Arthur? Just what I was going to ask you to do next."

"Yes, on the railroads. I called up the office of every road running out of Chicago. Rajah went to Milwaukee over the Northwestern on a fast freight which left at half-past two."

"Great Heavens! Is that so?"

"It is. He was shipped in your name, too, Tom. By gracious, these scoundrels were shrewd."

"Did you call up Milwaukee to see what became of him, Arthur?"

"No! I came right back. I thought perhaps we'd go up there."

"If the tiger is there we will. It may be only a blind. I'll telephone at once."

Tom rang for the doctor in charge.

"I want to use your telephone," he said, "and look here, you'll have to let me out; my business is such that I positively can't stay here a moment longer. I'm as well as you are—it really won't do."

"I see there's no use in trying to hold you," laughed the doctor, "and I was just coming to tell you so. I advise you to go, for between ourselves I didn't like the way the chief of

the fire department spoke as he and Captain Howard were going out."

"What!" cried Tom, with flashing eyes, "does that man dare to suspect me of firing my place?"

"Of course, it's absurd," replied the doctor, "but he's a very suspicious old fellow anyway. I've got no orders to hold you as yet, but I may get them at any moment. If I were you I would lose no time in leaving the hospital."

"You bet I won't, and a thousand thanks for the suggestion," said Tom. "Arthur, go and call a cab. Doctor, your telephone, please."

"Right this way," said the doctor. "I may get into trouble for this, but I hate to see any one persecuted, and I know the chief of old. If he can cook up a sensation for his own benefit, he'll do it every time."

Arthur was off in a moment, and when Tom got Milwaukee on the wire, he found himself talking with the freight office of the Northwestern.

"The tiger went on board the steamer General Parker early this morning," came over the wire. "I see by my book that the way-bill reads Windsor, Ontario. The steamer sailed at eight o'clock. No, I know nothing of the hairy boy you speak of, and I went aboard and saw the tiger, too. No such person was there. The cage was in charge of two dark foreigners. The shipment was made in the name of Thomas Terry. That's all I know."

And it was enough to excite Tom's gravest fears.

"They'll run the tiger over to Canada and we can't stop 'em," he said, when they found themselves in the cab. "Still we must try it. This is Ram Jemborree's work, and I'll fight him to the last gasp! We'll leave the company here. Arthur, and you and I will go over to Detroit on the night train."

## CHAPTER XVII.

### WHAT TOM OVERHEARD ON THE TRAIN.

"So you won't turn in, Tom?"

"No, Arthur, I can't. I'm too much worried. I'm just going to sit here and smoke and think."

"But don't you think you'd rest better in your berth? Remember what you went through last night."

"As though I could ever forget it! But I can't sleep now, Arthur. It's no use. Just leave me alone here and go and have your own sleep, old man."

"Well, I guess I will," said Arthur. "I'm feeling pretty tired. Of course, we shall be in Windsor long before the steamer reaches there, and, as we shall have plenty of time to see all the officials and arrange every detail, I don't despair at all of having an easy thing of it. Of course, they are bound to listen to us. Don't you fret, Tom. We'll get Rajah back all right."

"Yes," said Tom, bitterly; "but there's poor Tiger! What about him? Nothing! Oh, just think of it! Suppose that scoundrel has killed him? How could I have been so careless? I shall never cease to blame myself if the boy is dead!"

"It's terrible, I know," said Arthur. "Just as we were doing so well, too! It seems as if the pins had been knocked right out from under us. But take it easy and don't blame yourself too much. You have to sleep like other folks, you know. Take my word for it, everything will turn out all right."

Whereupon Arthur retired to "lower 8," leaving Tom in the smoking compartment of the Pullman to think.

Now, Tom was not much of a smoker. If he smoked a cigar or two in the evening, he was doing a great deal

Consequently it was not for the pleasure of enjoying the weed that he remained behind now.

It was that he might think—think—think! He had been doing nothing but think ever since the train started, and now as the night wore on he continued that unprofitable occupation when he ought to have been asleep.

Unprofitable because it does little or no good good to ponder over one's troubles thus intently. It would have been far wiser if Tom had turned in and taken his natural rest.

As the night wore on, Tom's thoughts ran on various subjects, and among others the sweet face of Minnie Meldrum was more than once in his mind. He longed to meet the girl, to know more of her, to be able to repay her for all her kindness, to decide if he actually loved her, for truth told Tom had begun to think of late that he did.

But Minnie Meldrum in Europe seemed as far removed as if she had been in the moon, and yet, somehow or other, Tom could not get the girl quite out of his head, and she was the last person he was thinking of when tired nature at length asserted itself, and he dropped off asleep with his head against the window, his coat collar turned up to cut off the draught, and his hat pulled down over his eyes.

The train rolled on and the night was passing.

Twice the porter looked in and thought of waking Tom, but as the boy seemed to be comfortable the considerate darky let him alone.

Station after station was passed, and at last at a certain junction two swell young men came into the Pullman.

As it was now almost morning and the train was nearing Detroit, they took seats in the smoking room where they lighted cigars and began talking in an undertone.

They saw Tom, of course, and they thought he was asleep, as he actually was.

For a while their conversation was too low even for him to hear, but after a little they got used to him and spoke louder.

About that time Tom was dreaming of Minnie Meldrum, and right in the midst of his dream he suddenly heard a voice say:

"Yes, that's to be my revenge on the old man. I'll marry Minnie in spite of him—in spite of himself. Let her wait till she reaches Windsor this morning—she'll find out that Ralph Pomeroy is not to be cast off like an old glove; we'll be man and wife before night, and the Detroit property will be yours at the price agreed on. Old Meldrum will have to come down off his high horse then. It ain't money I'm after, Jack. You know that, but I am determined to have the girl and to be revenged on her father. I'm worth five millions, and I guess I have a right to do as I please."

Here was a remarkable speech!

Every word of it Tom Terry overheard, but he never moved.

Through his half-closed eyelids he thought he recognized the dudish young man who had played the coward on the steamer Bauff Castle, on that ever memorable day when he saved Minnie from Rajah's claws.

Tom looked and listened in amazement; listened to the details of as dastardly a plot as was ever concocted by man.

"You see, Jack," Pomeroy continued, "the old man trusts me absolutely. That's why he gave me the power of attorney to sell out the Woodward avenue stores. He needs the money for a speculation he's going into as soon as he returns from Europe. If I sell the property to you for half price what's he going to do about it? I've got the deeds all signed in black right here in my grip. It will be the making of you, old man, and I'm glad to give you the chance."

The answer Tom could not catch, for the young man, whose dark, sinister face was close to Pomeroy's, spoke in low, guarded tones.

"You'd better not speak so loud, Ralph. That fellow in the

corner may not be so sound asleep as he seems to be," was all Tom heard.

"Pshaw! He's sound enough, and anyway he wouldn't understand what I'm saying," was the careless reply. "Now, then, you'll be at the station with the telegram when the train comes in. Mind, the sister is dying. Don't forget the name, be sure that's all right. She's staying with friends at Bellwood, Ontario, and wants Minnie to go there at once. What time does the train come in? Six twenty, and the Bellwood train goes right out within one minute. Once we are there nobody can help Minnie. She's got to marry me. Everything is arranged, and she can't escape. But here we are! Come on, Jack!"

The train had stopped at a certain crossing. It was already within the city limits of Detroit.

The plotters sprang up and left the car.

Tom, brushing the moisture from the window, saw them enter a close carriage and drive away.

"Thank Heaven, I was able to hold myself in," he murmured. "If I had sprung at his throat, it would have spoiled everything. Minnie Meldrum in America! It seems incredible that he would dare attempt such a thing, and yet—well, let him wait! I saved her from a tiger once, but here's a human tiger more dangerous than ever poor Rajah dared to be."

Arthur Potts wondered what made Tom so silent, when they got off the train at the station.

"He's thinking too much of Tiger," he concluded. "I must get his mind off the boy somehow, if I can."

But Tom's thoughts were very far away from Tiger just then.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

### HOW RALPH POMEROY'S PLOT FAILED.

"What! Ain't you going to have any breakfast, Tom?"

"No; I have no wish for breakfast and I have no time. I'm going over to Canada at once."

"Well, all right. I'm with you, of course. But what's your great hurry. The railroad offices won't be open yet, and the steamer won't be in before night if it is then."

"I've got business to attend to," said Tom, shortly.

There was something so mysterious about his manner that Arthur Potts was really quite worried about him, while they were crossing the ferry to Windsor.

"What in the world ails you?" he asked. "You are as nervous as a witch."

"Don't ask me, Arthur. I'm worried—that's all."

"About what?"

"Good Heavens! haven't I got enough to worry me? You ought to know."

"Oh, it ain't that, Tom. I know there's something else on your mind. You can't hide it from me."

"Well, I won't try," said Tom, desperately. "Arthur, you have a right to know. I love Minnie Meldrum."

"Hello! Well, I guessed that long ago."

They were standing near the rail on the upper deck, then, leaning over. Close behind them was the covered entrance to the upper cabin, and two men stood just inside of it.

Tom had not seen them nor had Arthur.

One of the listeners was as pale as a corpse. His lips were firmly set, and his fingers twitched nervously.

"By heavens, this means trouble, Jack!" he breathed.

"You're right it does," was the reply. "Didn't I warn you? Look here, Ralph Pomeroy, there's only one thing to do."

"What do you mean?"

Jack leaned forward and whispered in the other's ear.

"No, no! Never! I can't!"

"You must! If you don't I'll expose you! I'm not going to be dished out of my reward. You know how you came by your money, and I know."

"Hush, hush! You do it, Jack! Heaven, I can't! What if it should be the same boy?"

"I can't do them both. I'll take Tom Terry, and you tackle the other—he seems to be the slightest built of the two. I'll bet a hat it's the same boy!"

All oblivious to this, Tom and Arthur were still talking.

Suddenly the two had leaped upon them, and a desperate attempt was made to force the boys over the low rail.

Tom fought like his own tiger.

A moment's struggle, and then with a well directed blow between the eyes, he laid the man Jack at his feet.

"Tom! Help! Tom!" cried Arthur, as the fellow fell.

Too late!

They were clutching at each other's throats, Arthur crowded back against the rail.

All in an instant he toppled over backward, dragging Pomeroy after him.

With a resounding splash they struck the water.

"Help! Help! Save me!" yelled Ralph Pomeroy.

But the blue water closed over them, and the boat sped on.

Poor Tom, who could not swim a stroke, stood staring at the water, his heart filled with sensations beyond description.

Pomeroy's plot was foiled.

But at what a cost!

"Oh, Arthur! Arthur!" groaned Tom.

## CHAPTER XIX.

### "THE TIME MAY COME."

"Man overboard! Man overboard!"

Tom Terry raised the alarm.

In a moment all was confusion on the ferry boat.

Tom found himself on the stern deck in less time than it takes to tell it.

He paid no heed to the man "Jack," whom he had knocked out so effectually, but just let him lie where he fell.

Bells rang—the big boat stopped and backed.

"Who is he? Where is he? How did it happen? What is it all about?"

These and a dozen similar questions were put to Tom.

But there was just nothing to be done.

The Detroit river is wide and deep, and the current runs like a millrace.

He could scarcely find words to explain what had happened to the captain and the others who came crowding about.

"Why, this is murder business," said the captain, when he learned Tom's story. "Where is that man?"

Where indeed?

They could not find Jack when they came to look.

Yet several had seen him get up from the deck and hurry to the stern with the rest.

"He's hiding somewhere, but we'll have him out," said the captain. "Now, then, I'll go with you to the station—then you must come with me."

Just then the eastern express came thundering in.

Tom hurried forward to see the passengers come off the cars.

Was he to see Minnie Meldrum again?

With the captain close beside him, he stood watching the passengers leave the cars.

Suddenly his heart gave a great bound.

Yes, there she was!

It was Minnie Meldrum sure enough.

In a moment he was at her side.

"Why, Mr. Terry!" exclaimed the girl, blushing. "What a surprise to see you here! I only got back from Europe this week. My sister is very ill. I was called out to see her. I was expecting some one to meet me. Mr. Pomeroy. You remember him? He was with me on the day we first saw the tiger. I don't see him anywhere—he ought to be here."

She was the same free spoken, pleasant girl as of old. Poor Tom was so overwhelmed that he hardly knew how to explain.

"Come right into the office," the captain said. "I've got to get back to my boat. Mr. Terry, you can do your talking there."

"Come, Miss Minnie," said Tom, "don't be alarmed. I know nothing of your sister except that I have the best of reason for believing that she is not sick and never has been. You have had a very narrow escape."

Minnie turned deathly white.

"This is some of Ralph Pomeroy's villainy!" she exclaimed. "Tom, I want to know all."

She heard all in the office of the ferry company, and her indignation can well be imagined.

To Tom's surprise he found that the manager of the company was personally acquainted with Minnie, being an intimate friend of her brother-in-law, Mr. Todd.

This closed up matters tremendously.

The suspicions which the captain had felt about Tom were banished. Minnie's fears concerning her sister were set at rest, for the manager was able to assure her that he had seen Mrs. Todd only the day before.

"She went with Aleck Todd to Port Sarnia last night," he said. "You must know, Mr. Terry, that Aleck is working for the Grand Trunk Railroad. I can get him on the 'phone, and that will settle it all."

This was done, and Minnie had the satisfaction of talking with her brother-in-law a few moments later on, and hearing from his own lips that her sister was perfectly well.

Meanwhile, Tom had told his story to the manager, who was immensely interested, of course.

"Do you really want my advice, Mr. Terry?" asked the manager, who seemed a particularly bright young man.

"Indeed I do."

"Then here it is. Leave me to look after your friend. Not that I can encourage you, for it is my belief that neither he nor Pomeroy will ever be seen again. There, don't take it so to heart, man! I'll do my best. You hire a tug and go up the straits and head off the Parker. I'll give you a letter to Captain Watts, who is a personal friend of mine. If your tiger is on board you'll have no trouble. In that way you can arrange everything before the steamer gets here. I'll have the tug ready in half an hour's time."

"I'll do it in a moment; but what about Miss Meldrum, I can't leave her, and——"

"And you don't have to, Tom. I'm going with you!" said Minnie, firmly.

She had finished at the 'phone and was standing right behind Tom without his knowing it.

"You mustn't think of it, Miss Minnie!" exclaimed Tom. "Your best course is to go directly to your sister, and——"

"Now, look here, you listen to me," said Minnie, decidedly. "You don't understand that I'm right at home here. Father has large interests in Windsor. This is the place we came from. He owns half the tugs here, and everybody knows us. Mr. Whitney, why can't we take the Juno? After I've put Tom on board the Parker, I can go on to Sarnia, or back, for we may have to go up the lake."

"The very thing I was going to propose, Miss Meldrum,"

replied the manager. "Captain Macdonald's wife is living on the Juno this season. I don't see any reason why you shouldn't go."

"Then it's settled. Send the Carrier Pigeon to look for Mr. Potts and Pomeroy, and we'll go right aboard the Juno."

"I've sent the Pigeon already," replied the manager.

## CHAPTER XX.

### AN ASTOUNDING DISCLOSURE.

If Tom had only known it, all his anxiety about Arthur Potts might have been saved.

Arthur was a splendid swimmer, and as strong as a horse.

When he found himself actually going over he tried to throw his whole weight against Pomeroy, who pushed all the harder.

This was the cause of the accident. Pomeroy lost his balance and went over the low rail after his victim, and in an instant the water had swallowed them up.

They were swept far to one side of the ferry boat before they rose to the surface.

Before they came up Arthur knew that he had to fight for his life, for Pomeroy could not swim a stroke, and throwing his arms and legs about Arthur he would have dragged him down to eternity if the boy had not fought like a Trojan to work himself free.

When they finally rose to the surface Arthur had him by the hair, and the wretched lad almost ceased to struggle.

A big tug was right abreast of them.

"Hold on, there! Don't give up! We'll get you!" cried the man in the pilot-house and Arthur saw the tug turn.

As to just what happened after that he was never altogether clear, for his strength was fast failing and his head all in a whirl.

He remembered clutching the rope which was flung out to him, and winding it around his right hand, while he held on to Pomeroy's hair with his left.

That he managed to keep his hold goes without saying, for the next thing he clearly recollected he was lying on the deck of the tug half stripped, with men working over him.

"This one is all right!" said one of the deck hands, "but the other's pretty blamed low."

Arthur gasped and choked and tried to speak, but the words would not come.

But Arthur had fallen among friends, and he was not long in finding it out.

The tug was the Atlas, of Detroit, bound up Lake Huron, and Captain Tucker, who presided in the pilot-house, proved to be a splendid fellow.

"I'll put you ashore at Sarnia, and you can wire your friend," he said later, when Arthur, dressed in dry clothes, met him in the cabin and told his story. "What do you propose to do about this business? It's attempted murder. You ought to put that fellow under arrest if he lives."

"I shall," said Arthur, decidedly. "If you knew all, captain, you wouldn't blame me, either."

"Blame you!" cried the captain. "I wouldn't have blamed you if you had let him drown. Who is he, anyway? You say you don't know him?"

"His name is Pomeroy. He is a stranger to me, but——"

"Say, Cap, that other feller wants to see this gentleman," said a deck hand, thrusting his head in at the cabin door.

"I'll go right in and see him," said Arthur.

Arthur found Ralph Pomeroy lying wrapped in blankets on the floor of the engine-room.

"Come, don't give up," said Arthur, kindly, as he bent over him. "You'll pull out of this all right."

Ralph Pomeroy gasped faintly.

"Come closer—come closer," he managed to get out.

Arthur obeyed. He felt that death was near, and he was glad then that he had done all he could to save the fellow, villain though he was.

"Tom Terry!" whispered the dying man. "Tom Terry! He is your friend?"

"Yes! yes!"

"Tell him—tell him that I have wronged him deeply. Tell him that—that—tell him to go to my address—you'll find it in my memorandum book—and open the left-hand drawer of my desk—key in my pocket—papers there—all my fortune—five millions—belongs—belongs to Tom Terry. I—oh! Raise me up! I'm choking! I——"

That was all.

A moment later, and Arthur Potts stood in the presence of death.

## CHAPTER XXI.

### TOM SEES TIGER AGAIN.

"It's going to blow as you never saw it blow before, Miss Meldrum. Take my wurrud for it, 'twould be better if we were to put back into Sarnia and stay there until the storm has passed."

"Thus declared good Captain Macdonald, master of the lake tug Juno.

Tom and Minnie remained on deck until the storm struck.

All in an instant the captain's worst predictions were realized.

Port Sarnia vanished in a blinding whirl of mist and rain.

"This is fearful!" gasped Tom at last. "Miss Minnie, I wish with all my heart that we had put into Port Sarnia and waited. Really, I think we had better turn back now."

"Not on my account, Tom," replied the brave girl. "I've seen worse storms than this on Lake Huron. As long as Captain Macdonald says it's safe to keep on, I'm not the one to say turn back."

As the moments passed it grew worse instead of better, until at last Minnie had to give in and put herself under good Mrs. Macdonald's charge in the stateroom, but even then she would not hear of turning back.

Luckily for Tom he was one of those rare individuals who never learn what seasickness is. When Minnie retired he went out on deck ready to lend a hand.

It was a wonderful sight. Tom looked in awe at the mountainous waves which swept over the lake, threatening at every instant to engulf the tug.

"Look, lad! Look!" roared a deck hand, catching him by the arm and pointing. "There's a steamer now, and more than likely it's the Parker. If it is, heaven help her. There's something wrong. She'll be on the rocks at Lizard Point in ten minutes, and nothing can save her unless we are in time to give her a line."

And Tom saw a huge, dark object looming up out of the blinding spray at no great distance ahead.

The next few moments were exciting.

Soon the whole outline of the big lake steamer became visible.

"Yes, it's the Parker!" said Captain Macdonald, when Tom forced his way into the pilot-house. "She's broken down and is bound to go on the rocks, unless by the merest good luck she clears them and gets into Whitefish Bay; then she'll be safe enough, but—look! look! They are throwing over their

cargo! Her load has shifted. They are trying to right her, but it's too late."

But it did not need Captain Macdonald to call Tom's attention to what was going on.

They were now near enough to the steamer to see everything. Boxes and barrels were being tumbled into the lake through the main gangway. A man clothed from head to foot in oilskins came to the guards and shouted out something.

Captain Macdonald seized a speaking trumpet and roared back:

"Ay! Ay! We'll stand by you!"

Just at this moment Tom saw the men on the steamer pulling something toward the open gangway.

It looked like a big box, but Tom's accustomed eye was not to be deceived.

"Good heavens! My tiger! They are going to throw him overboard!" he cried. "Look! Captain! Look!"

"Holy saints! So it is!" roared the captain. "Listen to that!"

Suddenly a wild cry rang out above the howling of the storm.

It was Rajah's voice!

Now, they could see the tiger rushing back and forth in the cage.

"There goes my fortune," groaned Tom, as the men gave the cage a final shove.

Over it went into the water, sinking out of sight, Rajah giving one final scream as it went down.

At the same instant Tom saw a strange figure break away from among the men.

"Tiger!" he shouted. "Tiger! Don't!"

"What in thunder! Is it a baboon dressed up?" cried the captain.

Then Tom saw Tiger tear himself away from the men who tried to stop him, and spring after Rajah into the lake.

## CHAPTER XXII.

### THE TIGER SAFE AT LAST.

"There he goes down!"

"He's a goner!"

"No, he ain't! He's up again now!"

"Look! Look! He's making for the tiger's cage!"

The deck hands on the tug Juno were crowding at the rail, watching Tiger, as he battled with the waves.

And Tom?

Not idly standing by, watching the destruction of his property and the struggles of his humble friend, the Toda boy—he was very sure of that.

"Captain Macdonald!" he shouted, "that's my tiger, and that boy is my best friend, even if he is a freak. Will you help me to save them? It's five hundred dollars in your pocket if you do."

"Indeed and I will, lad," said the captain, to whom the money was a very decided consideration, "but it can't be done—they are doomed."

"It ain't so! See, the cage don't sink; no doubt life preservers have been fastened to it. As for the boy, he can swim like a fish."

"Anything you say goes, young man."

The Toda boy had indeed succeeded in reaching the cage, and he now climbed on top of it, and standing up, waved his arms above his head gesticulating to Tom.

It had cleared to some extent, and the wind was certainly dying down.

The steamer, lightened of its load, had righted to some extent, and had drifted around the Lizard into Whitefish Bay.

But no attempt was made to work the engine, and it was easy to see that she was hopelessly disabled.

As for Tom, he thought only of Tiger and Rajah.

Could he save them?

He thought so.

Minnie Meldrum thought so, too, for at this moment she suddenly appeared on deck.

"You can save them, can't you, Tom?" she asked. "I know you can. Everything is yours to command here."

"Then have a room made ready for the tiger. I shall have to take him out of the cage, for I can never get it aboard the tug."

"I'll do it. He shall come aboard whether they like it or not; but don't say a word, Tom, until the last moment—the deck hands will surely balk you if you do."

It was good advice, but Tom had already determined to take that course before Minnie spoke.

Meanwhile no time had been lost, for Tom had already given his preliminary orders, although we had not mentioned the fact.

The Juno was working up alongside the cage; the three big water casks on the tug were being emptied of their contents, and all the life preservers and gaskets were ready for instant use.

The wind now fell as rapidly as it had risen.

Captain Macdonald now resigned the wheel to his mate and came down to help Tom.

The cage was about half submerged, and Rajah was tramping up and down dismally through the water, every now and then giving a disconsolate howl.

"Tiger! Tiger!" shouted Tom, as soon as they were within hearing. "Can you catch the line?"

"Yes, sahib!" called the Toda.

"We've got to raise the cage to the deck level," Tom said. "Captain, do you think those casks will do it?"

"It's the only way; but even then I don't see how we are going to get the thing on board," was the reply.

"Leave that part to me. Your men can make them fast. I'd go out and do it myself, but I can't swim a stroke and if I should happen to fall off that would be the last of me."

"Cast that line!" roared the captain.

The line was thrown, and Tiger caught it deftly.

"Can you make fast?" yelled Tom.

"Yes, yes!" answered Tiger.

There were two big staples screwed into the top of the cage, and the Toda tied the rope securely to one of them.

"Haul in!" shouted the captain.

Tiger sprang upon the deck and threw himself at Tom's feet, kissing them in the old way.

The deck hands understood their business, and without any great difficulty succeeded in getting the three water casks fast to the cage, around which several life preservers had already been fastened, which in a measure served to bear it up.

But after the life preservers were in place the cage rose to the level of the deck.

Finding himself out of the water, Rajah began to jump about and howl louder than ever.

"Is there any danger of his breaking out?" asked Captain Macdonald anxiously. "Of course we'd better shoot him if he does."

"You'll never shoot him with my consent," replied Tom. "Miss Minnie, is everything ready?"

"There's the coal room," said Minnie. "I've fastened the other door and had the coal shoveled up out of the way. It's the best I can do."

"But you can never get the cage in there! You can't!"

get it aboard!" cried the captain. "We'd better try to tow it into Whitefish Bay."

"No!" said Tom. "Captain, get your men on the upper deck. I'm going to take the tiger into the coal room, without the cage."

"What! Let him out! Never with my consent!" declared the captain. "I expected something like this."

"Do as he tells you, or it's the last run you'll ever make on the Juno, Captain Macdonald!" cried Minnie, stamping her foot. "Mr. Terry's orders have to be obeyed!"

There was some further argument, and Minnie conquered, but Captain Macdonald stood ready with his revolver on the upper deck to which secure retreat every one retired, including Minnie and Mrs. Macdonald.

Tom and Tiger now had the lower deck to themselves.

"Rajah! Rajah!" called Tom, fixing his iron eye upon the tiger. "Good Rajah!"

Then he moved back and forth, still keeping his eye on the frightened beast, while "Tiger," standing in the doorway of the coal room, held up a big piece of beef which Rajah could easily see.

At first, the beast continued his uneasy walk and would not look at Tom, but after a little he ceased his snarling and moved back and forth as Tom moved, with his eyes steadily fixed upon the boy.

Of course, all this was watched with intense interest by the little audience on the upper deck.

So interested were they all, in fact, that nobody observed a tug which was rapidly bearing down upon them.

If Captain Macdonald had seen it, he would have recognized the "Atlas," of Detroit.

"Ready, Tiger!" breathed Tom at last. "Throw down the meat where he can see it. Now, then, get out of the way!"

Tiger jumped nimbly to one side, and Tom proceeded to unlock the cage. His own lock was upon it—this he had already ascertained.

As Tom backed into the coal room, his iron eye fixed upon Rajah, the tiger slunk after him and disappeared from the sight of those above.

There was one moment of suspense, and then the brave boy was seen backing out, and the key was turned in the lock of the coal room door.

"Hooray!" shouted Captain Macdonald.

"Three cheers for Tom Terry!" cried Minnie.

"Juno, ahoy! Is the tiger safe?" came the hail from over the lake.

The Atlas was right alongside by this time, and Tom gave a great cry as he suddenly turned and looked at the tug.

Arthur Potts stood at the bow.

"Hooray for our side!" he shouted, waving his hat. "Three cheers for Tom and Tiger! Hooray! Hooray! Hooray!"

## CHAPTER XXIII.

### ARTHUR'S SECRET.

All hands joined in the wild cheering, and the Atlas came alongside the Juno.

Arthur Potts leaped on board and caught Tom in his arms.

"Oh, Tom! Such news! Such news!" he cried, dancing about the boy like a maniac. "But I can't tell it now, so don't you ask me. It's my secret. No, I positively will not tell!"

Here was a most astonishing greeting, considering the circumstances.

But Tom was so overcome with joy at the sight of his friend

alive and well, that Arthur's curious speech made little or no impression on his mind at the time.

In fact, it was not until the tug was safe in Whitefish Bay that he even thought of asking Arthur what he meant by his strange words, and then he could gain no satisfaction, for Arthur only laughed and turned the question.

There had been too much to talk about to think of small matters.

It was a happy party which gathered in the cabin of the Juno, and it could not be expected that their happiness was to be much clouded by the announcement of Ralph Pomeroy's death.

"He was a scoundrel if there ever was one," declared Minnie. "Still, father trusted him, and I have known him all my life. We shall have to see that the remains are properly cared for. He has friends in Bellwood. We will telegraph them."

"Was he really so rich?" asked Arthur, then, a curious look coming over his face.

"He was originally a poor boy and always a great schemer," replied Minnie. "About three years ago he inherited a large fortune from an uncle by the name of Terry, who died in Detroit. By the way, same name as yours, Tom; no relation. I suppose?"

"No, indeed!" laughed Tom.

"Well, this man was very rich," continued Minnie: "they say he left Ralph four or five millions; at all events he has been cutting a great dash ever since."

To all of which Arthur never said a word.

In some mysterious manner Tiger had been taken out of the museum on Clark street while Tom slept, and when he came to himself he was on board the cars in company with Ram Jemborree, the Lascar, and two of his countrymen, who had the stolen tiger in charge.

It was probably a case of chloroforming. Remembering his own experiences, Tom could scarcely question this; but by far the most interesting part of Tiger's story was how, during the voyage, Ram got into a fierce quarrel with one of his Lascar friends and was killed.

This proved to be true enough. Of course, Tom and Arthur lost no time in going on board the General Parker, when the Juno was safe in Whitefish Bay.

Here they found the dead body of Ram Jemborree, lying on the lower deck, with his two assistants in irons.

Tom told his story to the captain of the disabled steamer, who was surprised enough to learn of the rescue of Rajah.

But with the complications which grew out of Ram's death, we have no further concern, and shall pass on to other and more important things.

And this determination takes us back to Windsor, to which port the Juno promptly returned.

Here Rajah was caged and taken to a vacant store which Tom hired.

Through Minnie Meldrum's influence, Tom obtained permission to exhibit the tiger, so he promptly began his arrangements and telegraphed to Signor Bizani, the fire king, at Chicago, to bring the company on.

On the evening of the third day he opened his little museum with a full company and performed to an immense crowd.

Inside of these two days Tom cleared enough to pay all expenses, and give Captain Macdonald his five hundred dollars.

Minnie Meldrum still lingered in Windsor, staying at the house of a relative.

Every day she came to the show and was always admitted to the little room behind the curtain, but strange to say her coming did not please Tom.

A singular change had suddenly come over the boy.

His conversation with Minnie grew most formal. He would

scarcely speak to Arthur Potts, although when he did he was civil enough, and he had good cause to call his assistant to account, too, for Arthur was neglecting business in the most shameful way.

Four times he had been absent all day without saying a word to Tom, and greatly to the latter's inconvenience, and when Minnie called he seemed determined to monopolize that young lady's society. They had long conversations in whispers, and to make matters worse, Tom learned by the merest accident that on the day of one of Arthur's mysterious absences, he had been seen riding up Woodward avenue, Detroit, with Minnie Meldrum in a cab.

Was Tom jealous?

At last, feeling that he could stand it no longer, he determined to have it out with Arthur, once and for all.

"I want to see you a minute, Arthur," he said that night, when the doors closed.

"Well, I'm here," replied Arthur, with a curious twinkle in his eye. "Talk it out, old man; what's the row?"

"Arthur, are you going back on me?" asked Tom, sadly.

"Never!"

"Then—then——"

"Oh, pshaw, Tom! Don't get your back up. You love Minnie, and she adores the very ground you walk on, and——"

"Let me speak. Minnie Meldrum is as far above me as the stars. She is a rich man's daughter and I'm only a poor showman, and——"

"Hold on, Tom!" cried Arthur, catching hold of both the boy's hands. "I've got a secret. When you know it, all will be explained. Give me till to-morrow noon, will you? Remember this——" and tears came into Arthur's eyes—"you did the square thing by me, and I'll never go back on you. Never, Tom! Never! Never in the wide world!"

## CHAPTER XXIV.

### CONCLUSION.

The little show at Windsor was in full blast next morning as usual, for Tom's was a continuous performance, beginning at ten o'clock and running on until midnight.

By eleven the place was crowded with people, and Tom went into Rajah's cage and put him through his tricks.

Arthur was in the box all right that morning, but so far Minnie Meldrum had not appeared.

Tom's act was the last one, and then the programme began over again. Signor Bizani did his fire act, and Mademoiselle Pedrado did a Spanish dance, and then there were songs and other acts until it worked around to Tiger's time again.

As Tom was exhibiting the hairy boy and making his speech, he saw Minnie Meldrum enter in company with an elderly gentleman in black.

They took seats and remained watching the show.

It was soon Tom's turn to go into the tiger's cage, and he found it a hard matter to concentrate his mind on his work, for there was Arthur out of the box office again talking to Minnie in the audience. Tom could see that Bizani had taken Arthur's place.

Then Tom went into the cage doing his "iron eye" act, as Arthur called it, with the usual success and receiving the usual applause.

When he came out he looked for Minnie and Arthur and the man in black—they had vanished.

But when he got in behind the curtain there they were.

"Oh, I beg your pardon, Miss Meldrum. I didn't know——" he stammered.

"No, you didn't know, or you wouldn't have talked to poor Arthur as you did last night, Tom!" exclaimed the girl, "and you wouldn't call me Miss Meldrum when it ought to be Minnie. Tom, we've been working for you, Arthur and I. He loves you like a brother, and I—well, he shall tell it! It is his right. Out with it, Arthur!"

"Not until you two have joined hands," said Arthur, stoutly. "Mr. McPherson, you will excuse? Ah! Here is Tiger! Come here, you monkey! Take the sahib's other hand! Tom, you said last night that you were only a poor showman. It ain't true. You're a rich showman. You are five times a millionaire, Tom! You own blocks and blocks of houses in Detroit, and if you don't own that hand you hold before this day is out, why, then you can bounce Arthur Potts for calling you a fool!"

Had Arthur Potts planned this dramatic denouement?

We think not. It was probably done on the spur of the moment; but there was Mr. McPherson to confirm his astonishing statement, and to tell Tom that every dollar of the fortune enjoyed for a brief time by Ralph Pomeroy belonged to him, inherited under the will of the uncle whom he had never known.

Ralph Pomeroy was Tom's cousin, and would never have touched a penny of the property if it had not been supposed that Tom was dead.

All this the papers found in Pomeroy's rooms, and the investigations of Mr. McPherson, who was one of the most noted lawyers in Detroit, abundantly proved.

Which was the happiest—Tom, Minnie or Arthur Potts, the faithful friend?

It is hard to tell. Perhaps it was Tiger, who was made to realize that some great good fortune had come to the sahib.

At all events, Tom and Minnie were very happy for a few short months, and then they were married in the Meldrum mansion in New York.

On the day of his wedding Tom sold Rajah to a noted showman for three thousand dollars. Arthur Potts, who was best man, declared it was a shame, and that the tiger was worth a great deal more.

Shortly after that Tom and his bride sailed for Europe, and on the same day Arthur Potts entered the firm of Meldrum & Co. as a full partner on capital furnished by Tom, taking the place of Mr. Dusenbury, who died early in the fall.

Tiger went with Tom and Minnie, for, of course, Tom would not part with his "mascot."

But Minnie is well used to it and lets the boy go everywhere. So where one is the other is sure to be—Tom and Tiger.

THE END.

Read "ON A SINKING ISLAND," by Capt. Thos. H. Wilson, which will be the next number (627) of "Pluck and Luck."

SPECIAL NOTICE. All back numbers of this weekly except the following are in print: 1 to 5, 7, 8, 10 to 25, 27, 29 to 36, 38 to 40, 42, 43, 48 to 51, 53 to 55, 57 to 60, 62, 64, 66 to 69, 71, 72, 75, 81, 84 to 86, 88, 89, 92 to 94, 99, 100, 102, 105, 107, 109, 110, 116, 119, 124 to 126, 132, 140, 163, 166, 171, 179 to 181, 212, 216, 239, 247, 257, 265, 268, 277. If you cannot obtain the ones you want from any newsdealer, send the price in money or postage stamps by mail to FRANK TOUSEY, PUBLISHER, 24 UNION SQUARE, New York, and you will receive the copies you order by return mail.

# Pluck and Luck.

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## THINGS OF INTEREST.

Because Richard Wagner's widow declared that the noise which automobiles caused was out of harmony with the poetical atmosphere of Bayreuth, the municipal authorities have prohibited them from entering that town.

"The color of a book's cover helps to sell it," said a publisher. "If a row of books stands on a counter, every visitor will examine first the volume with the strongest, brightest binding—that is to say, the volume bound in red. After red, a good clear shade of green is the most catchy color. Then comes blue, then gray."

Earl Stone and Paris Hattabaugh were wading in a creek near an old sawmill, at Attica, Ind., when they saw a dark object apparently fastened between two sunken tree trunks. Earl made an attempt to dislodge the object, when, to his amazement, he saw the splashing of a catfish's tail. The lads began at once to extricate the fish from its peculiar position. Earl waded into the stream and bestrode the fish, while his older companion took the shoestring band from his straw hat and tied it through the gills of the fish, and they then pulled the monster out. It weighed thirty-two pounds.

Astronomers once believed that the entire starry universe revolved around a centre of attraction, and the star named Alcyone, in the group of the Pleiades, was selected by Maedler as marking that great centre. It has long been known, however, that Maedler's conclusion, which was based on the apparent motions of the stars, was incorrect, and if any universal centre exists it has not yet been discovered. In fact, many of the stars seem to be moving in straight lines, some in one direction and some in another; and among these is our own sun. But it is possible that further observations will show that all the stars are really moving in curved lines. In the meantime it has been found that there are certain groups, or sets, of stars which appear to travel together. To what set, if any, the sun belongs, we do not yet know, but Delauney has presented reasons for thinking that those stars whose distances have been measured (that is to say, those which are nearest to us) group themselves around Sirius, the dog-star, in a manner similar to that in which the inner planets are grouped around the sun. If this be correct, Sirius may possibly be the master sun of which our orb of day is a distant satellite.

A record on file in the Library of Congress contains an account of the adventures of a certain Hubbard, who was sentenced in Boston to the stocks for having indulged in an unwarrantable fit of ill-temper. When he had taken his seat for the day there came along a drove of swine, which seemed to cast upon him those leering looks that only a fat pig can bestow. A dog followed, sniffing at the prisoner's feet, and making feints—unpleasantly approaching reality—of biting him. Then a cock, mounting to the very top of the stocks, crowed his derision upon the victim below; and presently a rough fellow, after indulging in ugly taunts, threw at him fetid toadstools and a dead snake. Then an Indian appeared, who, in a drunken rage, stimulated by some fancied injury, rushed at Hubbard with a tomahawk, probably intending nothing worse, however, than to give him a severe fright, which he certainly succeeded in doing. Help came from an unexpected quarter; for at that moment an old bull came tearing down the road. His attention was attracted by the stocks, and with a roar he prepared for a charge. Alarmed in his turn, the savage darted off. The bull made a dash at the stocks, and carried away the corner post, but without even grazing the object of his apparent wrath. Whether he was disgusted by the little he had accomplished, or his animosity was thus satisfied, he started off, bellowing and shaking his head, much to the relief of the said Hubbard. And then the unfortunate man was left in comparative peace to his own meditations and the cutting sleet of a November day.

## OUR COMIC COLUMN.

Doesn't Curtem, the tailor, remind you of a doctor?" "I should say not. He reminds me of that little bill I owe him every time we meet."

Harry—"Wot's yer hurry, Bill?" Bill—"I've got to go to work." Harry—"Work? Why, wot's the matter with the missis? Ain't she well?"

"I wouldn't marry you if you were the last man on earth!" she declared. "You bet you wouldn't," the mean man replied. "I would be in a position then to take my pick."

Mrs. Bridley—Yes, I know my husband plays poker, but he says he only does it for fun. Mrs. Wise—Then he doesn't get what he plays for. I'm told all the other players have the fun.

Jaggles—Do you think there will ever be any radical change in the style of men's hats? Waggles—Not unless somebody invents a hat that will cover the bald spot on the back of the head.

Editor—Here! I'm not going to stand for this sort of bulls any longer! Assistant—What's the matter? Editor—I wrote, "The Solons who control the party——" Assistant—Yes? Editor—And the printer made it "saloons!"

Widow (to wine traveler)—I am afraid it isn't any good your coming this time. My husband has just died. He was only forty, too—— W. T.—Dear, dear! How sad! And to think of all the wine he might have drunk!

"What did you think of my remarks on government ownership?" asked the politician. "I couldn't tell whether you favored it or not." "Then the speech is a success. That is what I was trying to keep the people from finding out."

## THE LOOSENEED NAIL

By Alexander Armstrong.

Ivan, the son of Skibotski, dismounted from his coal-black steed before the house of old Vladimir Minsk in the town of Bender, by the swift current of the Dniester, flowing ever onward toward the Black Sea.

Vladimir Minsk was old and infirm, grasping and cunning, ugly as a Cossack of the Don, and yet the father of the fairest girl in all of Benderstown.

"Heaven be with you!" cried young Ivan, as old Vladimir hobbled from his house.

Right cordially the old man returned the greeting, for Ivan was a man after his own heart—young in years and old in wisdom, crafty and cruel—no man at a bargain could overmatch young Ivan.

"Oh, Father Minsk, I come upon business," quoth the youth. "You have a daughter fair; she will need a husband ere long, and I am the man that will take her."

Old Vladimir laughed cunningly.

"Son Ivan, Heaven be praised! I can say naught against thee, but that thy father, worthy Skibotski, did not leave what he should when he left this earth to seek another abode. The man that takes Catherine from me must count down a hundred rubles into my hand."

"Waste not thy breath, for thou hast none to spare!" cried Ivan, tersely. "The hundred roubles thou shalt have. Know that my uncle, old Paul Skibotski, the grim merchant of Ismail, has knocked at Peter's gate and left me sole heir to a thousand rubles or more."

Minsk stared in astonishment.

"Look not amazed—thy eyes will not bear much trying," Ivan continued. "To-morrow morn, if the saints forbid me not, I shall ride to Ismail to receive my fortune."

"Good luck go with you!" exclaimed Minsk, seizing the young man by the hand and pressing it warmly. "Come, take a stoup of brandy, son-in-law that is to be. We'll drink to thy prosperous journey, and a safe escape from robbers on the way."

"I fear not that!" Ivan replied proudly. "Heaven be praised! I can wield my arms as well as any Cossack of the Don or turbaned robber from the coverts of the Carpathian chain; besides, my horse here is wondrous fleet of foot."

Into the house went the two; they pledged each other in stoups of brandy, and thus ratified the compact.

Catherine was summoned, and her destiny made known to her.

She offered no remonstrance, although she hated the greedy and boastful Ivan worse than if he had been a Turk.

She knew her father's way—knew, too, that for silver rubles he would have married her to the fiend himself, if Satan had bid high enough.

Ivan departed, and Catherine, when her household duties were fulfilled, and the shades of the night had come, crept from the house and sought counsel of her godmother, an old dame who lived in a little hut on the outskirts of the town.

She was reputed to be a wise woman, as those dames were called who could read the future and predict which grain would grow and which ship escape the peril of wind and wave.

To her godmother Catherine told her trouble, and the dame listened attentively.

"And Ivan will ride to Ismail to-morrow?" she asked.

Catherine nodded assent.

"The way is long—three hundred versts or more; dangerous, too, for wild and fierce robbers lurk within the wood of Novimir, close to Pruth," the wise woman said, thoughtfully. "I will help thee, god-daughter, for Ivan, the son of Skibotski, is a wicked wretch. No longer ago than yesterday he threatened to lay his whip across my old shoulders if I gleaned a few worthless grains in his fields."

The old woman rose, and from her cupboard she took a pair of pincers.

"God-daughter, you know the stable where Ivan keeps his black steed?"

"Yes," Catherine replied.

"Go there to-night, take a measure of food for the horse, put it into his manger, and when he eats, lift up the right forefoot, and with this pair of pincers loosen a nail in the shoe."

"Is that all?" the girl asked, in wonder.

"Yes, my child; the simplest means have oft-times produced the greatest results. You loosen the nail; Ivan's folly and wickedness will do the rest."

Catherine thanked her godmother, took the pincers, and hurried home.

She took a measure of grain in her apron, and stealing from the house, sought the stable, where the black steed pawed with his hoofs.

The girl patted the sleek sides of the beast and poured the grain into the manger.

The horse began to eat.

The maid lifted up the right forefoot of the animal, and with the pincers loosened a nail in the shoe.

This done, she hurried away and sought her home.

She had perfect faith that the charm would work.

The next morning Ivan arose betimes, and after breaking his fast, furbished up his arms and called for his steed.

The horse was brought, Ivan mounted, and then, as he gathered up the reins, the horse pawed impatiently, and a keen-eyed stable-lad saw the loosened nail.

"Stay a bit, master!" he cried, "till I run for a smith. There is a nail loose."

"The wit is loose in thy head, dolt!" Ivan retorted angrily. "Dost thou think that I will stay an hour for a bungling smith, when time presses?"

And, without more words, Ivan gave the horse his head and galloped on.

A hundred versts he made that day, stopping but once for bite and sup, and at night he rested in a wayside inn.

In the morning, when the horse was brought, the stable-boy told him that a nail was loose in one of his fore-shoes.

"I know it, dull-head!" Ivan replied, and galloped on.

A hundred versts he made the second day; still the nail held—only loose, nothing more.

And on the third night he rode into Ismail.

The fortune left by his uncle he received, and he carefully sewed up the precious rubles in the interior of his saddle.

Surely no robber would think of a common saddle lined with rubles.

On the morning of the fourth day he mounted his horse, and rode away homeward.

Still the warning cry came wherever he halted:

"A nail is loose!"

Still he made reply:

"I know it; it will serve."

The night of the fifth day, when he halted, it was only a hundred versts or so from home.

In the morning a new cry met his ears:

"Brother, a nail is gone!"

"Let it be; I have but a hundred versts to ride."

"And the others are loose," said a smith in the throng of idlers gathered around the horse, examining the shoe as he spoke.

"And you, I judge, are a smith, and wish to take some kopecks from me!" Ivan cried with a sneer.

"By St. Peter!" exclaimed the smith, loudly, "I spoke not that, and if you are too poor to pay, I'll fix the shoe and charge thee nothing. 'Twere a shame indeed that such a noble beast should suffer because another brute bestrides him!"

Ivan waited to hear no more, but gave his horse a furious lash and rode away, the jeers of the crowd sounding in his ears.

Through the dark forest of Novimir, ever the chosen abode of disbanded soldiers, outlawed Cossacks of the Don and brigands of every class, the road led.

Once within the arches of the deep woods, Ivan trembled and repented that he had not listened to the warning of the smith, and allowed the nail to be replaced.

If he were attacked by the outlaws known to haunt the forest, on the speed of his horse he depended for safety.

As he journeyed onward, murmuring prayers to every saint in the calendar, suddenly through the arches of the wood rode a band of fierce and bearded men, bearing glistening weapons in their hands.

The outlaws were at hand, and now flight alone could save the son of Skibotski.

Like an arrow from a bow sprung forward the black descendant of the Arab steeds.

For a hundred yards or so it seemed as if the dark horse would bear the terrified Russian far beyond harm; but then, with a sudden jerk, the shoe parted from the foot, and the horse fell upon his knees, casting his rider over his head.

Then the wild robbers came up, and they stripped Ivan from head to heel.

A few scanty rags they gave him to cover his nakedness, and with switches, lustily applied, drove him through the forest.

The black horse and the saddle lined with rubles he never saw again.

In a sorrowful plight Ivan returned to Bender.

No chance was there now of his wedding fair Catherine, and old Minsk was so enraged at the mishap that he took a fit of spleen and died.

And to this day, in the province drained by the Dniester, they tell the story of Ivan's mishap.

## A Battle With Two Ferocious Wildcats

Miss Annie Tichenor, the beautiful daughter of Colonel James N. Tichenor, of Montague county, Texas, writes a correspondent, is the gay lady's name, and her escapade occurred in a camping-out excursion up the valley of the little Washita River. A party composed of two sisters, Miss Tichenor and three young gentlemen, two of them Miss Tichenor's brothers, took a week's trip in prairie schooners up the valley in search of health and pleasure. One night they camped in a narrow ravine which ran at right angles to the river. They had picketed their horses and built the campfire to prepare their supper, when Annie, with her brother's rifle on her arm, sauntered up the gully to see whence it led.

A few score yards from the wagon the valley made a turn, and she found herself in a little canyon with rocky walls

extending thirty or forty feet on either side. The formation seemed to be of the limestone order, and little caves were set into the walls in many places.

She had gone some distance when she heard a soft breathing sound and she saw on a little ledge a few feet away a sight which caused her to reel with fright. A monstrous wildcat, with gleaming eyes, lashing its tail backward and forward and preparing for a leap upon its supposed prey. Her dog, a large Newfoundland, which had accompanied her, crouched under her skirts. She was too much excited to think of flight or using her weapon. Indeed, she had no time, for the cat, though it must have been at least twenty feet away, had made its leap and was sailing through the air in her direction.

With an agility born of outdoor training, the girl sprang to one side, and the foe, hissing with anger, rolled sprawling on the stones. Like lightning she took advantage of the momentary delay and leaped to the wall of the canyon, where she crept into the mouth of a little cave, thinking that she would have a better opportunity of defending herself.

The dog, in the meanwhile, had assailed the wildcat, and the two were clawing and tearing each other furiously as they rolled over and over on the ground.

Miss Annie was congratulating herself on her safety, when a new danger threatened. From the dark interior of the cave sounded a roaring noise which seemed the echo of the cry uttered by the wildcat. Shrieking with fear, the fleet-footed girl left her place of vantage, and clambered with all the rapidity of which she was capable up the side of the canyon. Reaching a narrow ledge, she turned and saw the cat's mate emerge from the cavern and clamber toward her. The first animal was grappling with the dog at the foot of the cliff.

Slowly she moved along the ledge toward its narrowest portion, where she stood, rifle in hand, awaiting her pursuer. The second cat cautiously followed her footsteps, lashing its side with its long tail, and its eyes glistening with anticipation. The girl examined her weapon, and, finding it in perfect condition, rested it against a wall of rock, and, taking careful aim, waited until the foe was within four or five feet, when she fired.

With a bound the creature tumbled backward, and, clawing and spitting, went rolling down the precipice, and landed near its mate and the dog. Here the battle was growing unequal, for, though the dog was nearly as large as its antagonist, it was growing weaker, and the girl saw that it would be but a short time until he would be wearied out.

Reloading the rifle from her vantage ground, she drew a careful point on the pair, and when the ribs of the cat offered a fair mark, fired. As she did so a second shot rang out from down the canyon, and her brother's form came in view, he having been attracted by her first firing.

Whether by her own or the young man's bullet, the wild animal was now in its death throes, and a few good blows gave it its quietus, the dog escaping, badly torn and wearied, but not seriously injured.

The two animals were robbed of their magnificent hides, which make attractive trophies of Miss Annie's prowess. They measure four feet six inches from tip to tip, and are among the largest ever killed hereabout. Indeed, it is unusual for the animals to exist in this neighborhood. It is thought that these, being a distinctively Rocky Mountain species, followed the Red River Valley down from Colorado, and were out of their usual location.

Although the canyon has been scoured by hunters since the escapade related, no trace of other similar animals have been found, and the cavern in which these had their home is entirely deserted.

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